THE

HEIRESS.

A

COMEDY

IN FIVE ACTS.

By Lieut. General JOHN BURGOYNE.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL DRURY-LANE.

Spectatores, ad pudicos mores facta hæc fabula est;
Qui pudicitiæ esse voltis præmium, plausum date.

PLAUTUS.

BELFAST:

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TO THE

EARL of DERBY.

My dear Lord,

OUR connection and friendſhip, as well as the partiality I know you will entertain in favour of any attempt at regulated Drama, mark you as the perſon, to whom, with the moſt propriety, and inclination, I can inſcribe the Comedy of the Heireſs.

It alſo comes to your Lordſhip's hand with a ſecondary claim to your acceptance, as owing its exiſtence to the leiſure and tranquility I enjoyed during the two laſt ſummers at Knowſley.

I long intended, as your Lordſhip can witneſs, to keep the name of the author concealed. After the ſucceſs with which the Play has been honoured, I muſt expect that the change of my deſign will be imputed by many to vanity: I ſhall ſubmit, without murmuring, to that belief, if I

may obtain equal credit for the ſincerity of another pride which this diſcovery gratifies---that, of teſtifying, in the moſt public manner, the reſpect, and affection with which I have the honour to be,

My dear Lord,

Your moſt obedient,

And moſt humble ſervant,

J. BURGOYNE.

Hertford-ſtreet, Feb. 1ſt, 1786.

PREFACE.

PREFACE.

THE approbation the following Comedy has received upon the Stage, and the candour with which every criticiſm, that has come to the Author's knowledge, has been accompanied, might encourage him to truſt it to the cloſet without any other preface, than an acknowledgement of his gratitude to the Public, for the honours done to him. And if he detains the reader a few moments more, it is not to diſavow what has been hinted at in ſome of the daily prints, as a ſpecies of plagiariſm, but to plead it in behalf of dramatic writing in general, againſt rules, that if carried to the extent they lead to, would fix ſhackles upon genius, and give a very undue limitation to variety.

In point of fable, for inſtance—Is it a reproach to borrow?

Surely the dramatiſt, like the architect, brings his talents equally to the teſt, whether he builds upon another man's ground or his own. And if inſtead of ſmall and detached parts, the writer of the Heireſs had taken the compleat plot of his play from a novel; he would have imitated the examples (the only imitation to which he has any pretence) of the beſt dramatic Poets of every age.

In point of originality of characters—It is humbly hoped this Comedy is not without it. But preſent inſtances apart, it is ſubmitted to the judicious, whether ſuch an exaction of novelty as would make a reſemblance to any thing ever ſeen upon the ſtage before unacceptable, might not materially vitiate the public taſte, carry the major part of writers beyond the ſcope of nature and probability, and deprive the ſpectator of that pleaſing and infinite diverſity of ſhape and colouring that the leading paſſions, vices, and follies of civiliſed life, admit. Love, avarice, miſanthropy, &c. &c. if drawn a thouſand and a thouſand times with new ſhades, and in different points of view, will do as much credit to invention, and have as juſt an effect in exhibition, as if Moliere or Congreve had never touched the ſubjects. It is not whether there may not be perſonages in the Heireſs, in whom we may diſcover family features, that is aſked, but whether they

are

are not ſtill individuals, with whom we have been hitherto unacquainted—is a queſtion, not for the Author to determine.

Original thought—It has been obſerved that there is an image in a ſpeech of Lord Gayville, copied cloſely from Rouſſeau. Very poſſibly it may be ſo. The Author of the Heireſs certainly has read that elegant writer; and to ſhew how eaſily invention may be deceived, he will quote another writer (in his eſtimation ſtill more elegant) who thus accounts, and apologizes for, unconſcious plagiariſm—"Faded ideas," ſays Mr. Sheridan, "Float in the fancy like half forgotten dreams; "and imagination, in its fulleſt enjoyments, becomes ſuſpicious of its offspring, and doubts whether it has created or adopted."

More ſentiments and expreſſion due to the imagination of others, may poſſibly be challenged, though they are equally out of the recollection of the Author.—He would only wiſh the candid to admit the probability, that while he believed them his own, he thought them his beſt.

Many of the ſcenes now ſubmitted to peruſal, have been ſhortened in repreſentation, and a few words have been altered occaſionally to preſerve connection—a circumſtance neceſſary to be known leſt the performers ſhould be ſuſpected of negligence, when, on the contrary, too much cannot be ſaid of their

attention and zeal. When all have been eminent, it would be unneceſſary, if not invidious, to particularize any: There is nevertheleſs a Lady, to whom, by her ſtanding ſeparately and individually in one part of the performance, the Author, without departing from his maxim, may expreſs his more than ordinary obligation. Miſs Farren, by her inimitable manner of delivering the Epilogue, has made a better apology to the public than any his pen could have produced, for a compoſition which, from an accident, was much too haſtily written in ſome parts, and in others pieced together with a like inſufficiency of time.

The Epilogue excepted, no defects in the following ſheets can be covered by the excuſe of hurry: They cannot be ſo, conſiſtently with truth, nor indeed, with inclination: For the Author had rather be thought incapable of pleaſing, after his greateſt cares, than wanting in the attention and reſpect which every man who ventures to publiſh a production of this nature owes to the world and to himſelf—Not to let it paſs from his hands without frequent reviſal, and the beſt conſidered finiſh his abilities can give.

PROLOGUE.

By the Right Hon. RICHARD FITZPATRICK.

Spoken by Mr. King.

AS ſprightly ſunbeams gild the face of day,
When low'ring tempeſts calmly glide away,
So when the Poet's dark horizon clears,
Array'd in ſmiles, the Epilogue appears.
She, of that houſe the lively emblem ſtill,
Whoſe brilliant ſpeakers ſtart what themes they will,
Still varying topicks for her ſportive rhymes
From all the follies of theſe *fruitful* times,
Uncheck'd by forms, with flippant hand may cull,
Prologues, *like Peers*, by privilege are dull.
In ſolemn ſtrain addreſs th' aſſembled Pit,
The legal judges of dramatic wit,
Confining ſtill with dignified decorum,
Their obſervations,—to the Play before 'em.
Now when each batchelor a helpmate lacks,
(That ſweet exemption from a double Tax)
When laws are fram'd with a benignant plan
Of light'ning *burdens* on the married man,
And Hymen adds one ſolid comfort more
To all thoſe *comforts* he conferr'd before,
To ſmooth the rough laborious road to fame
Our bard has choſen—an *alluring name*.
As wealth in wedlock oft is known to hide
The imperfections of a homely bride,
This tempting title, he perhaps expects,
May heighten beauties,—and conceal defects:

The

Thus ſixty's wrinkles, view'd thro' fortune's glaſs,
The roſy dimples of ſixteen ſurpaſs:
The *modern* ſuitor, graſps his fair one's hand,
O'erlooks her perſon, and adores——*her land*;
Leers on her houſes with an *ogling eye*,
O'er her rich acres heaves an *am'rous* ſigh,
His *heartfelt* pangs thro' groves of—*timber* vents,
And runs diſtracted for—*her three per cents.*
Will thus the Poet's mimic Heireſs find,
The bridegroom critic to *her* failings blind,
Who claims, alas! his nicer taſte to hit,
The Lady's portion paid in *ſterling* wit?
On your decrees, to fix her future fate,
Depends our Heireſs for her whole eſtate:
Rich in your ſmiles, ſhe charms th' admiring town;
A very *bankrupt*, ſhould you chance to frown:
O may a verdict, giv'n in your applauſe,
Pronounce the proſp'rous iſſue of her cauſe,
Confirm the name an anxious parent gave her,
And prove her Heireſs of—the Public Favour!

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Clement Flint, —	Mr. KING.
Clifford, — — —	Mr. SMITH.
Lord Gayville, ——	Mr. PALMER.
Alfcrip, — ——	Mr. PARSONS.
Chignon, —— —	Mr. BADDELEY.
Mr. Blandifh, ——	Mr. BANNISTER, jun.
Prompt, — —	Mr. R. PALMER.
Mr. Rightly, —	Mr. AICKIN.

Chairmen, Servants, &c.

WOMEN.

Lady Emily, —	Miſs FARREN.
Miſs Alfcrip, —	Miſs POPE.
Miſs Alton, ——	Mrs. CROUCH.
Mrs. Sagely, —	Mrs. BOOTH.
Tiffany, — —	Miſs TIDSWELL.
Mrs. Blandifh, —	Mrs. WILSON.

THE

HEIRESS.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A Lady's Apartment.*

Mr. Blandiſh and Mrs. Letitia Blandiſh diſcovered writing: letters folded up, and meſſage cards ſcattered upon the table.

Mrs. Blandiſh.

Leans upon her Elbows as meditating. Writes as pleaſed with her thought, lays down the Pen.

THERE, it is compleat ——— *(reads conceitedly.)*

"Adieu, my charming friend, my amiable, my all
Accompliſhed ſociate! conceive the ardor of
Your lover's united with your own ſenſibility—
Still will the compound be but faintly expreſſive
Of the truth and tenderneſs of your

"LETITIA BLANDISH."

There's phraſe—there's a period—Match it if you can.

Blandiſh. Not I indeed: I am working upon a quite different plan: but you are as welcome to my caſt off ſtyle, as you ſhould be to my old embroidery: Pick out the gold if it be of any uſe.

Mrs. Blandiſh. Caſt off ſtyle! Excellent aſſurance! And pray, Sir, to whom are you indebted for the very elements of wheedling, and all that has attended it's progreſs, from the plaything in your nurſery, to the brilliant upon your finger?

Blandiſh. For the elements, my honour'd ſiſter, and partner, I confeſs the obligation; but for the proficiency, I have

I have attain'd the ſublime of the ſcience, while you with more experience are ſtill a novice; like a Miſs at her ſtutt'ring harpſicord, with a nimble finger, but no ear;—You keep in tune, 'tis true, for that is the merit of the inſtrument, but you are continually out of time, and all-ways thrumming the ſame key.

Mrs. Blandiſh. Which in plain Engliſh is as much as to ſay——

Blandiſh. That human vanity is an inſtrument of ſuch eaſe and compaſs, the moſt unſkilful can play ſomething upon it: but to touch it to the true purpoſe——

Mrs. Blandiſh. Well, Sir, and look round you pray; theſe apartments were not furniſhed from the intereſt of two miſerable thouſand pounds in the three per cents, any more than our table and equipage have been maintained by *your* patrimony—A land eſtate of three hundred a year, out of repair, and mortgaged for nearly it's value. I believe I have ſtated our original family circumſtances pretty accurately.

Blandiſh. They wanted improvement, it muſt be acknowledged. But before we bring our induſtry to a compariſon, in the name of the old father of flattery, to whom is that perfect phraſe addreſs'd?

Mrs. Blandiſh. To one worth the Pains, I can tell you. ——Miſs Alſcrip.

Blandiſh. What, ſenſibility to Miſs Alſcrip! my dear ſiſter, this is too much, even in your own way; had you run changes upon her fortune, ſtocks, bonds and mortgages; upon Lord Gayville's coronet at her feet, or forty other coronets, to make footballs of, if ſhe pleaſed—it would have been plauſible; but the quality you have ſelected——

Mrs. Blandiſh. Is one ſhe has no pretenſions to, therefore the flattery is more perſuaſive—that's my maxim.

Blandiſh. And mine alſo, but I don't try it quite ſo high—Senſibility to Miſs Alſcrip! you might as well have applied to her Uncle's Pig-Iron, from which ſhe derives her firſt fifty thouſand; or the harder heart of the old Uſurer, her Father, from whom ſhe expects the ſecond. But come *(rings)* to the buſineſs of the morning.

Enter Prompt (the Valet de Chambre.)

Here Prompt—ſend out the chairmen with the billets and cards—Have you any orders, madam?

Mrs. Blandiſh. (delivering her letter). This to Miſs Alſcrip,

Aſcrip, with my impatient enquiries after her laſt night's reſt, and that ſhe ſhall have my perſonal ſtatus in half an hour.—You take care to ſend to all the lying-in ladies?

Prompt. At their doors, Madam, before the firſt load of ſtraw.

Blandiſh. And to all great men that keep the houſe—Whether for their own diſorders, or thoſe of the nation?

Prompt. To all, Sir—their ſecretaries, and principal clerks.

Blandiſh. *(aſide to Prompt.)* How goes on the Buſineſs you have undertaken for Lord Gayville?

Prompt. I have convey'd his letter, and expect this morning to get an anſwer.

Blandiſh. He does not think me in the ſecret?

Prompt. Mercy forbid you ſhould be! *(aſide)*

Blandiſh. I ſhould never forgive your meddling.—

Prompt. Oh! never, never!

Blandiſh. *(aloud)* Well, diſpatch.—

Mrs. Blandiſh Hold!—apropos, to the lying in liſt—at Mrs. Barbara Winterbloom's to enquire after the Angola kittens, and the laſt hatch of Java ſparrows.

Prompt. *(Reading his memorandum as he goes out.)* Ladies in the ſtraw—Miniſters, &c.—Old Maids, Cats and Sparrows—never had a better liſt of how d'ye's ſince I had the honour to collect for the Blandiſh family. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Blandiſh. Theſe are the attentions that eſtabliſh valuable friendſhips in female life. By adapting myſelf to the whims of one, ſubmitting to the jeſt of another, aſſiſting the little plots of a third, and taking part againſt the huſbands with all, I am become an abſolute eſſential in the polite world; the very ſoul of every faſhionable party in town or country.

Blandiſh The country! Pſhaw! Time thrown away.

Mrs. Blandiſh. Time thrown away! as if Women of faſhion left London, to turn freckled ſhepherdeſſes.—No, no; cards, cards and backgammon, are the delights of rural life; and ſlightly as you may think of my ſkill, at the year's end I am no inconſiderable ſharer in the pin-money of my ſociety.

Blandiſh. A paltry reſource—Gambling is a damn'd trade, and I have done with it.

Mrs. Blandiſh. Indeed!

Blandiſh. Yes, 'twas high time.—The women don't

pay.

pay.—And as for the men, the age grows circumspect in proportion to it's poverty: It's odds but one loses a character to establish a debt, and must fight a duel to obtain the payment. I have a thousand better plans, but two principal ones—And I am only at a loss, which to chuse.

Mrs. Blandish. Out with them, I beseech you.

Blandish. Whether I shall marry my friend's intended bride, or his sister.

Mrs. Blandish. Marry his intended bride?—What pigeon and usury?—Your opinion of her must advance your addresses admirably.

Blandish. My Lord's opinion of her will advance them; he can't bear the sight of her, and defiance of his uncle, Sir Clement Flint's eagerness for the match, is running mad after an adventure, which I, who am his confident shall keep going till I determine.—There's news for you.

Mrs. Blandish. And his sister, lady Emily, the alternative! The first match in England in beauty, wit, and accomplishment.

Blandish. Pooh! A fig for her personal charms, she will bring me connection that wou'd soon supply fortune; the other wou'd bring fortune enough to make connection unnecessary.

Mrs. Blandish. And as to the certainty of success with the one or the other.—

Blandish. Success!—Are they not women? Why even you can cajole them—What then must I do who have advantage of sex, and am equally ready to adore every feature of the face, or to fall incorporeally in love with the mind.—But no more of theory, I must away to practice, —And first for Gayville, and his fellow-student Clifford, who is come home with a wife face, and a conceited confidence in his old ascendency over his Lordship; but thanks to the accident that kept him two months behind, Mr. Monitor will find himself mistaken.

Mrs. Blandish. Be ware of the Monitor notwithstanding in another quarter. Lady Emily and he were acquainted at the age of first impressions.

Blandish. I dare say he always meant to be the complete friend of the family, tho' without a single talent for the purpose. I question whether he ever made a compliment in his life.

Mrs. Blandish. Oh, the brute.

Blandish. His game I find, has been to work upon Lord Gayville

Gayville's underſtanding; he thinks he muſt finally eſtabliſh himſelf in his eſteem, by inexorably oppoſing all his follies—Poor Simpleton?—Now my touch of oppoſition goes only to inhance the value of my acquieſcence. So adieu for the morning—You to Miſs Alſcrip with an unction of flattery fit for a houſe painter's brush; I to Sir Clement, and his family, with a compoſition as delicate as ather, and to be applied with the point of a feather.

[*Going.*

Mrs. Blandiſh. Hark you, Blandiſh, a good wiſh before you go: To make your ſucceſs compleat, may you find but half your own vanity in thoſe you have to work on!

Blandiſh. Thank you my dear Letty; this is not the only *tap* you have hit me to-day, and you are right; for if you and I did not ſometimes ſpeak truth to each other, we ſhould forget there was ſuch a quality incident to the human mind. *Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Lord Gayville's Apartment.*

Enter Lord Gayville and Mr. Clifford.

Lord Gayville. My dear Clifford, urge me no more. How can a man of your liberality of ſentiment deſcend to be the advocate of my uncle's family avarice.

Clifford. My lord you do not live for yourſelf. You have an ancient name and title to ſupport.

Lord Gayville. Prepoſterous policy! Whenever the father builds, games, or elections, the heir and title muſt go to the market. Oh the happy families Sir Clement Flint will enumerate. Where this practice has prevail'd for centuries; and the eſtate been improved in every generation, tho' ſpecifically ſpent by each individual?

Clifford. But you thought with him a month ago, and wrote with tranſport of the match—"Whenever you think "of Miſs Alſcrip, viſions of equipage and ſplendor, villas "and hotels, the delights of independence, and profuſe"neſs, dance in your imagination."

Lord Gayville. It is true, I was that diſſipated, faſhionable wretch.

Clifford. Come, this reſerve betrays a conſciouſneſs of having acted wrong: You would not hide what would give me pleaſure: but I'll not be officious.

Lord Gayville. Hear me without severity, and I'll tell you all—Such a woman, such an assemblage of all that's lovely in the Sex!

Clifford. Well but—the who, the how, the where?

Lord Gayville. I met her walking, and alone; and indeed so humbly circumstanced as to carry a parcel in her own hand.

Clifford. I cannot but smile at this opening of your adventure—how many such charmers have we met in our former excursions from Cambridge! I warrant she had a smart hat, and a drawn up petticoat, like a curtain in festoons, to discover a new buckle, and a neat ancle.

Lord Gayville. No, Clifford, her dress was such as a judicious painter wou'd chuse to characterize modesty. But natural grace and elegance, stole upon the observation, and through the simplicity of a Quaker, shew'd all we con'd conceive of a Goddess. I gazed and turn'd idolater.

Clifford. (*Smiling.*) You may as well finish the description in poetry at once; you are on the very verge of it.

Lord Gayville. She was under the persecution of one of those beings peculiar to this town, who assume the name of Gentlemen upon the sole credentials of a boot, a switch, and round hat—The *things*, that escape from counters and writing desks to disturb public places, insult foreigners, and put decent women out of countenance. I had no difficulty in the rescue.

Clifford. And having silenced the dragon, in the true spirit of chivalry, you conducted the damsel to her castle.

Lord Gayville The utmost I could obtain was, leave to put her into a hackney coach, which I followed unperceived and lodged her in the house of an obscure milliner in a bye street.

Clifford. The sweet Cyprian retreat! Such a priestess of your goddess, I dare say, did not refuse access to the shrine.

Lord Gayville. It is true a few guineas made the milliner my own. I almost lived in the house; and often when I was not suspected to be there, passed whole hours list'ning to a voice that would have captivated my very soul, tho' it had been her only attraction. At last——

Clifford. What is to follow!

Lord Gayville. By the persuasions of the woman, who laugh'd at my scruples with an unknown girl, a lodger upon a second floor, I hid myself in the closet of her apart-

ment

ment. And the practised trader assured me I had nothing to fear from the interruption of the family.

Clifford. Oh for shame, my Lord: whatever may be the end of your adventure, such means were very much below you.

Lord Gayville. I confess it, and have been punish'd. Upon the discovery of me, fear, indignation and resolution agitated the whole frame of the sweet girl by turns —I would sooner have committed sacrilege than have offered an affront to her person—Confused — overpower'd I stammer'd out a few incoherent words—Interest in her fortune—respect—entreaty of forgiveness— and left her, to detest me.

Clifford. You need go no further. I meant to rally you, but your proceedings and emotion alarm me for your peace and honour. If this girl is an adventurer, which I suspect, you are making yourself ridiculous—If she is strictly innocent, upon what ground dare a man of your principal think farther of her? You are on a double precipice; on one side impell'd by folly, on the other——

Lord Gayville. Hold, Clifford, I am not prepar'd for so much admonition. Your tone is changed since our separation; you seem to drop the companion and assume the Governor.

Clifford. No, my Lord, I scorn the Sycophant and assert the Friend.

Enter Servant, follow'd by Blandish.

Servant. My Lord, Mr. Blandish. [*Exit.*

Clifford. (significantly) I hope every man will do the same.

Blandish. Mr. Clifford do not let me drive you away —I want to learn your power to gain and to preserve dear Lord Gayville's esteem.

Clifford. (with a seeming effort to withdraw his hand which Blandish holds.) Sir, you are quite accomplish'd to be an example.—

Blandish. I have been at your apartment to look for you—we have been talking of you with Sir Clement— Lady Emily threw in her word——

Clifford. (disengaging his hand) Oh, Sir; you make me too proud *(aside)* Practised Parasite! [*Exit.*

Blandish. (aside) Sneering Puppy— *(to Lord Gayville)* My Lord you seem disconcerted, has any thing new occur'd?

Lord Gayville. No, for there is nothing new in being diſappointed in a friend.

Blandiſh. Have you told your ſtory to Mr. Clifford?

Lord Gayville. I have, and I might as well have told it to the Cynic, my Uncle: he could not have diſcourag'd, or condemn'd me more.

Blandiſh. They are both in the right. I ſee things exactly as they do—but I have leſs fortitude, or more attachment than others:—The inclinations of the man I love are ſpells upon my oppoſition.

Lord Gayville. Kind Blandiſh! you are the confident I want.

Blandiſh. What has happened ſince your diſcovery in the cloſet?

Lord Gayville. The lovely wanderer left her lodgings the next morning—but I have again found her—ſhe is in a houſe of equal retirement, but of very different character, in the city, and inacceſſible. I have wrote to her, and knowing her to be diſtreſs'd, I have enclos'd Bank Bills for two hundred pounds, the acceptance of which I have urged with all the delicacy I am maſter of, and by heaven without a purpoſe of corruption.

Blandiſh. Two hundred pounds, and Lord Gayville's name—

Lord Gayville. She has never known me, but by the name of Mr. Heartly. Since my ambition has been to be loved for my own ſake, I have been jealous of my title.

Blandiſh. And prithee by what diligence or chance, did Mr. Heartly trace his fugitive?

Lord Gayville. By the acuteneſs of Mr. Prompt, your Valet de Chambre. You muſt pardon me for preſſing into my ſervice for this occaſion, the fellow in the world fitteſt for it.

Blandiſh. You know I am incapable of being angry with you,—but that dog to practiſe upon my weakneſs, and engage without my conſent!

Lord Gayville. The blame is all mine. He is now waiting an anſwer to my letter—how my heart palpitates at the delay ——

Enter Prompt.

Prompt. (*Starts at ſeeing his maſter.*) Are you alone my Lord?

Lord Gayville. Don't be afraid Prompt—your peace is made.

Prompt.

Prompt. Then there is my return for your Lordſhip's goodneſs. *(Giving the letter)* This letter was juſt now brought to the place appointed by a porter.

Lord Gayville. By a Cupid, honeſt prompt, and theſe characters were engraved by the point of his arrow! *(kiſſing the ſuperſcription.)* "To—Hearthy, Eſq." Blandiſh, did you ever ſee any thing like it?

Blandiſh. If her ſtyle be equal to her hand-writing—

Lord Gayville. If it be equal!—Infidel! you ſhall have proof directly. *(opens the letter precipitately)* Hey day! what the Devil's here? my bills again and no line—not a word—Death and diſappointment, what's this?

Prompt. Gad it's well if ſhe is not off again—faith I never aſk'd where the letter came from.

Lord Gayville. Should you know the meſſenger again?

Prompt. I believe I ſhould, my Lord, For a Cupid he was ſomewhat in Years, about ſix feet high, and a noſe rather given to purple.

Lord Gayville. Spare your wit, Sir, till you find him.

Prompt. I have a ſhorter way—my life upon it I ſtart her myſelf.

Blandiſh. And what is your device, ſirrah?

Prompt. Lord, Sir, nothing ſo eaſy as to bring every living creature in this town to the window: a tame bear, or a mad ox; two men, or two dogs fighting; a balloon in the air—(or tied up to the ceiling 'tis the ſame thing) make but noiſe enough and out they come, firſt and ſecond childhood and every thing between—I am ſure I ſhall know her by inſpiration.

Lord Gayville. Shall I deſcribe her to you.

Prompt. No, my lord time is too precious—I'll be at her laſt lodgings, and afterwards half the town over before your Lordſhip will travel from her forehead to her chin.

Lord Gayville. Away then, my good fellow. He cannot miſtake her, for when ſhe was form'd nature broke the mold [*Exit Prompt.*

Blandiſh. Now for the blood of me, cannot I call that fellow back; It is abſolute infatuation: ah! I ſee how this will end.

Lord Gayville. What are your apprehenſions?

Blandiſh. That my ferret yonder will do his part compleatly, that I ſhall ſet all your uncle's doctrine at nought, and thus lend myſelf to this wild intrigue, 'till the girl is put into your arms.

Lord

Lord Gayville. Propitious be the thought, my beſt friend —my uncle's doctrine! but adviſe me, how ſhall I keep my ſecret from him for the preſent? He is ſuſpicion perſonified: the eye of Sir Clement is a very probe to the mind.

Blandiſh. (aſide) Yes, and it ſometimes gives one a curſed deal of pain before he is convinced of touching a ſound part [*To Lord Gayville.*] Your beſt chance would be to double your aſſiduities to Miſs Alſcrip. But then diſſimulation is ſo mean a vice.——

Lord Gayville. It is ſo indeed, and if I give into it for a moment.—It is upon the determination of never being her huſband. I may deſpiſe and offend a woman; but diſguſt won'd be no excuſe for betraying her. Adieu, Blandiſh; if you ſee Prompt firſt, I truſt to you for the quickeſt communication of intelligence.

Blandiſh. I am afraid you may—I cannot reſiſt you [*Exit Lord Gayville.*]—Ah! wrong—wrong—wrong; I hope that exclamation is not loſt. A blind compliance with a young Man's paſſions, is a poor plot upon his affections. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *Mrs. Sagely's Houſe.*

Enter Mrs. Sagely and Miſs Alton.

Mrs. Sagely. Indeed Miſs Alton, (ſince you are reſolved to continue that name) you may bleſs yourſelf for finding me out in this wilderneſs—Wilderneſs! this town is ten times more dangerous to youth and innocence: every man you meet is a wolf.

Miſs Alton. Dear Madam, I ſee you dwell upon my indiſcretion in flying to London, but remember the ſafeguard I expected to find here. How cruel was the diſappointment! how dangerous have been the conſequences! I thought the chance happy that threw a retired lodging in my way: I was upon my guard againſt the other ſex, but for my own to be treacherous to an unfortunate, could I expect it?

Mrs. Sagely. Suſpect every body, if you would be ſafe—but moſt of all ſuſpect yourſelf. Ah, my pretty truant—the heart that is ſo violent in it's averſions, is in ſad danger of being the ſame in it's affections, depend upon it?

Miſs Alton. Let them ſpring from a juſt eſteem and you will abſolve me; my averſion was to the character of the wretch I was threaten'd with—can you reprove me?

Mrs. Sagely. And tell me truly now; do you feel the ſame deteſtation for this worſe character you have made ac-

acquaintance with? This rake—this abominable Heartly? ——Ah child, your look is ſuſpicious.

Miſs Alton. Madam, I have not a thought, that I will not ſincerely lay open to you. Mr. Heartly is made to pleaſe and to be avoided; I deſire never to ſee him more —his diſcovery of me here; his letters, his offers, have greatly alarmed me. I conjure you loſe not an hour in placing me under the ſort of protection I ſolicited.

Mrs. Sagely. If you are reſolved, I believe I can ſerve you. Miſs Alſcrip, the great Heireſs, (you may have heard of the name in your family) has been enquiring among decay'd gentry for a companion. She is too fine a lady to bear to be alone, and perhaps does not look to a huſband's company as a certain dependance. Your muſical talent will be a great recommendation—She is already apprized, and a line from me will introduce you.

Miſs Alton. I will avail myſelf of your kindneſs immediately.

Prompt. (*within*). I tell you I have Buſineſs with Mrs. Sagely,——I muſt come in.

Mrs. Sagely. As I live here is an impudent fellow forcing himſelf into the paſſage.

Miſs Alton. Oh heaven! if Mr. Heartly ſhould be behind.

Mrs. Sagely. Get into the back parlour; be he who he will, I'll warrant I protect you. [*Exit Miſs Alton.*

Enter Prompt (*looking about.*)

Mrs. Sagely. Who are you, Sir? What are you looking for?

Prompt. Madam, I was looking—I was looking—for *you*.

Mrs. Sagely. Well Sir, and what do you want?

Prompt. (*ſtill prying about*). Madam, I want—I want —I want—

Mrs. Sagely. To rob the Houſe perhaps.

Prompt. Juſt the contrary, Madam, to ſee that all is ſafe within it.—You have a treaſure in your Poſſeſſion that I would not have loſt for the world—A young lady.

Mrs. Sagely. Indeed!—begone about your buſineſs, friend—there are no young ladies to be ſpoke with here.

Prompt. Lord Madam, I don't deſire to ſpeak with her —My attentions go to ladies of the elder ſort—I come to make propoſals to you alone.

Mrs. Sagely. *You* make propoſals *to me?* did you know my late huſband, Sir?

Prompt. Huſband! My good Mrs. Sagely—be at eaſe —I

—I have no more views upon you, that way, than upon my grandmother—My propoſals are of a quite different nature.

Mrs. Sagely. Of a different nature! Why you audacious varlet! Here, call a conſtable———

Prompt. Dear Madam, how you continue to miſunderſtand me—I have a reſpect for you, that will ſet at nought all the perſonal temptations about you, depend upon it, powerful as they are—And as for the young Lady, my purpoſe is only that you ſhall guard her ſafe.—I wou'd offer you a pretty ſnug houſe in a pleaſant quarter of the town, where you two wou'd be much more commodiouſly lodg'd—the furniture new, and in the prettieſt taſte—A neat little ſide-board of plate—a black boy, with a turban, to wait upon you———

Mrs. Sagely. And for what purpoſe am I to be bribed?——I am above it, ſirrah.——I have but a pittance, 'tis true, and heavy out-goings—My huſband's decayed book-keeper to maintain, and poor old Smiler, that ſo many years together drew our whole family in a chaiſe.—Heavy charges—but by cutting off my luxuries, and ſtopping up a few windows, I can jog on, and ſcorn to be beholden to you, or him that ſent you. [*Prompt tries at the door, and peeps thro' the key-hole.*] What wou'd the impertinent fellow be at now? Keep the door bolted, and don't ſtand in ſight.

Prompt. (aſide.) Oh! oh!—She is here I find, and that's enough——My good Mrs. Sagely—your humble ſervant——I wou'd fain be better acquainted with you——in a modeſt way——but muſt wait, I ſee, a more happy hour. [*Aſide going out.*] When honeſty and poverty *do* happen to meet, they grow ſo fond of each other's company; it is labour loſt to try to ſeparate them. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Sagely. Shut the ſtreet door after him, and never let him in again.

Enter Miſs Alton from the inner room.

Miſs Alton. For mercy, Madam, let me be gone immediately. I am very uneaſy——I am certain Mr. Heartly is at the bottom of this.

Mrs. Sagely. I believe it, my dear, and now ſee the neceſſity of your removal. I'll write your letter—and heaven protect you. Remember my warning, Suſpect yourſelf. [*Exit.*

Miſs Alton, ſola. In truth I will. I'll forget the forbearance

bearance of this profligate, and remember only his intentions. And is Gratitude then ſuſpicious? Painful leſſon! A woman muſt not think herſelf ſecure becauſe ſhe has no *bad* impulſe to fear: ſhe muſt be upon her guard, leſt her very beſt ſhould betray her. [*Exit.*

End of the Firſt Act.

ACT II.

SCENE I. *An apartment in Sir Clement Flint's houſe.*

Lady Emily Gayville and Clifford at Cheſs.

Sir Clement ſitting at a diſtance pretending to read a parchment, but ſlyly obſerving them.

Lady Emily.

CHECK—If you do not take care, you are gone the next move.

Clifford. I confeſs, Lady Emily, you are on the point of compleat victory.

Lady Emily. Pooh, I would not give a farthing for victory without a more ſpirited defence.

Clifford. Then you muſt engage with thoſe (if thoſe there are) that do not find you irreſiſtible.

Lady Emily. I could find a thouſand ſuch; but I'll engage with none whoſe triumph I cou'd not ſubmit to with pleaſure.

Sir Clement. *(Apart)* Pretty ſignificant on both ſides. I wonder how much farther it will go.

Lady Emily. Uncle, did you ſpeak?

Sir Clement. [*Reading to himſelf.*] "And the parties to this indenture do farther covenant and agree, that all and every the ſaid lands, tenements, and hereditaments ——um——um"——How uſeful ſometimes is ambiguity! [*Loud enough to be heard.*]

Clifford. A very natural obſervation of Sir Clement's upon that long parchment. [*Pauſes again upon the cheſs board.*] [*Lady Emily looking penſively at his face.*]

Clifford. To what a dilemma have you reduc'd me, Lady Emily? If I advance, I periſh by my temerity; and it is out of my power to retreat.

Sir Clement. [*Apart*] Better and better!——To talk in cypher is a curious faculty.

Clifford. Sir?

Sir Clement. [*Still reading*] "In witneſs whereof the ſaid parties have hereunto interchangeably ſet their hands and ſeals this—um—um—day of um—um.—"

Lady Emily. [*Reſuming an air of vivacity*] Come, I triſle with you too long—There's your coup de grace—Uncle, I have conquer'd. [*Both riſing from the table.*]

Sir Clement. Niece, I do not doubt it——and in the ſtyle of the great proficients, without looking upon the board. Clifford, was not your mother's name Charlton? [*Folding up the parchment and riſing.*]

Clifford. It was, Sir.

Sir Clement. In looking over the writings Alſcrip has ſent me, preparatory to his daughter's ſettlement, I find mention of a conveyance from a Sir William Charlton of Devonſhire. Was he a relation?

Clifford. My grandfather, Sir: The plunder of his fortune was one of the firſt materials for raiſing that of Mr. Alſcrip, who was ſteward to Sir William's eſtate, then manager of his difficulties, and laſtly his ſole creditor.

Sir Clement. And no better monopoly than that of a man's diſtreſſes. Alſcrip has had twenty ſuch, or I ſhould not have fingled out his daughter to be Lord Gayville's wife.

Clifford. It is a compenſation for my family loſſes, that in the event they will conduce to the intereſt of the man I moſt love.

Sir Clement. Hey day, Clifford!—take care, don't trench upon the Blandiſh——*Your* cue, you know, is Sincerity.

Clifford. You ſeem to think, Sir, there is no ſuch quality. I doubt whether you believe there is an honeſt man in the world.

Sir Clement. You do me great injuſtice—ſeveral—ſeveral—and upon the old principle that—"honeſty is the beſt policy."—Self-intereſt is the great end of life, ſays human nature—Honeſty is a better agent than craft—ſays proverb.

Clifford. But as for ingenuous, or purely diſintereſted motives——

Sir Clement. Clifford, do you mean to laugh at me?

Clifford. What is your opinion, Lady Emily?

Lady Emily. [*Endeavouring again at vivacity*] That there may be ſuch: but it's odds they are troubleſome or inſipid. Pure ingenuouſneſs, I take it, is a rugged ſort of a thing, which ſcarcely will bear the poliſh of common

common civility; and for disinterestedness—young people sometimes set out with it; but it is like travelling upon a broken spring—one is glad to get it mended at the next stage.

Sir Clement. Emily, I protest you seem to study after me; proceed child and we will read together every character that comes in our way.

Lady Emily. Read one's acquaintance—delightful! what romances, novels, satires, and mock heroics present themselves to my imagination! Our young men are flimsy essays; old ones, political pamphlets; coquets, fugitive pieces; and *fashionable beauties*, a compilation of advertized perfumery, essence of pearl, milk of roses, and Olympian dew.—Lord, I should now and then tho' turn over an acquaintance with a sort of fear and trembling.

Clifford. How so?

Lady Emily. Lest one should pop unaware upon something one should *not*, like a naughty speech in an old comedy; but it is only skipping what wou'd make one blush.

Sir Clement. Or if you did not skip, when a woman reads *by* herself and *to* herself, there are wicked philosophers who doubt whether her blushes are very troublesome.

Lady Emily. (To Sir Clement) Do you know now that for that speech of your's——and for that saucy smile of yours *(To Clifford.)* I am strongly tempted to read you both aloud!

Sir Clement. Come try—I'll be the first to open the book.

Lady Emily. A treatise of the Houyhnhnms after the manner of Swift, tending to make us odious to ourselves, and to extract morose mirth from our imperfections—— *(turning to Clifford)* Contrasted with an exposition of ancient morality address'd to the moderns: a chimerical attempt upon an obsolete subject.

Sir Clement. Clifford! we must double down that page. And now we'll have a specimen of her Ladyship.

Lady Emily. I'll give it you myself, and with justice; which is more than either of you wou'd.

Sir Clement. And without skipping.

Lady Emily. Thus then,—a light, airy, fantastic sketch of genteel manners as they are; with a little endeavour at what they ought to be—rather entertaining than instructive, not without art, but sparing in the use of it——

Sir Clement. But the passions, Emily. Do not forget what should stand in the foreground of a female treatise.

Lady Emily. They abound: but mixed and blended cleverly enough to prevent any from predominating; like the colours of a ſhot luteſtring, that change as you look at it ſideways or full: they are ſometimes brighten'd by vivacity, and now and then ſubject to a ſhade of caprice —but meaning no ill—not afraid of a critical review: and thus gentlemen I preſent myſelf to you freſh from the preſs, and I hope not inelegantly bound.

Sir Clement. Altogether making a perfectly deſirable companion for the cloſet: I am ſure Clifford you will agree with me. Gad we are got into ſuch a pleaſant freedom with each other, it is a pity to ſeparate while any curioſity remains in the company——Prithee Clifford ſatisfy me a little as to your hiſtory. Old Lord Hardacre, if I am rightly informed, diſinherited your father, his ſecond ſon.

Clifford. For the very marriage we have been ſpeaking of. The little fortune my father could call his own was ſunk before his death as a proviſion for my mother; upon an idea that whatever reſentment he might perſonally have incurred—it would not be extended to an innocent offspring.

Sir Clement. A very ſilly confidence. How readily now, ſhould you and I, Emily, have diſcover'd in a ſenſible old man, the irreconcilable offence of a marriage of the paſſions—You underſtand me?

Lady Emily. Perfectly! *(aſide.)* Old petrifaction, your hints always ſpeak forceably.

Sir Clement. But your uncle, the preſent Lord, made amends?

Clifford. Amply. He offer'd to ſend me from Cambridge to an academy in Germany, to fit me for foreign ſervice: Well judging that a cannon ball was a fair and quick proviſion for a poor relation.

Sir Clement. Upon my word I have known uncles leſs conſiderate.

Clifford. When Lord Gayville's friendſhip, and your indulgence, made me the companion of his travels, Lord Hardacre's *undivided* cares devolved upon my ſiſter; whoſe whole independant poſſeſſions at my mother's death, was five hundred pounds—All our education had permitted that unhappy parent to lay by.

Lady Emily. Oh, for an act of juſtice and benevolence

to

to reconcile me to the odious man! Tell me this inſtant what did he do for Miſs Clifford?

Clifford. He beſtow'd upon her forty pounds a year, upon condition that ſhe reſided with a family of his dependants in a remote county, to ſave the family from diſgrace; and that allowance, when I heard laſt from her, he had threaten'd to withdraw, upon her refuſing a deteſtable match he had endeavour'd to force upon her.

Lady Emily. Poor girl!

Sir Clement. Upon my word an intereſting ſtory, and told with pathetic effect.—Emily, you look grave child.

Lady Emily. (*aſide.*) I ſhall not own it however. (*to him.*) For once, my dear uncle, you want your ſpectacles. My thoughts are on a diverting ſubject—My firſt viſit to Miſs Alſcrip; to take a near view of that collection of charms deſtined to my happy brother.

Sir Clement. You need not go out of the room for that purpoſe. The ſchedule of an Heireſſes's fortune is a compendium of her merits and the true ſecurity for marriage happineſs.

Lady Emily. I am ſure I gueſs at your ſyſtem—— *That* union muſt be moſt wiſe which has wealth to ſupport it, and no affections to diſturb it.

Sir Clement. Right.

Lady Emily. That makes a divorce the firſt promiſe of wedlock; and widowhood, the beſt bleſſing of life; that ſeparates the intereſt of huſband, wife and child——

Sir Clement. To eſtabliſh the independant comfort of all——

Lady Emily. Upon the broad baſis of family hatred. Excellent, my dear uncle, excellent indeed; and upon that principle, tho' the Lady is likely to be your niece, and my ſiſter, I am ſure you will have no objection to my laughing at her a little.

Sir Clement. You'll be puzzled to make her more ridiculous than I think her. What is your plan?

Lady Emily. Why tho' her pride is to be thought a leader in faſhions, ſhe is ſometimes a ſervile copyiſt. Blandiſh tells me I am her principal model; and what is moſt provoking, ſhe is intent upon catching my manner as well as my dreſs, which ſhe exaggerates to an exceſs that vexes me. Now, if ſhe *will* take me in ſhade, I'll give her a new outline, I am reſolved; and if I do not make her a caricature for a print-ſhop——

Clifford. Will all this be ſtrictly conſiſtent with your good nature, Lady Emily?

Lady Emily. No, nor I don't know when I ſhall do any thing conſiſtent with it again, except leaving you two critics to a better ſubject than your humble ſervant.

[*Curtſies and exit with a lively air.*

Sir Clement. Well, Clifford! What do you think of her?

Clifford. That when ſhe profeſſes ill-temper, ſhe is a very aukward counterfeit.

Sir Clement. But her beauty, her wit, her improvement ſince you went abroad? I expected from a man of your age and taſte, ſomething more than a cold compliment upon her temper—Could not you compatibly with the immaculate ſincerity you poſſeſs, venture as far as admiration?

Clifford. I admire her, Sir, as I do a bright ſtar in the firmament, and conſider the diſtance of both as equally immeaſurable.

Sir Clement. (aſide.) Specious rogue! *(to him.)* Well, leave Emily then to be wink'd at through teleſcopes; and now to a matter of nearer obſervation—What is Gayville doing?

Clifford. Every thing you deſire, Sir, I truſt; but you know I have been at home only three days, and have hardly ſeen him ſince I came.

Sir Clement. Nor I neither; but I find he has profited wonderfully by foreign experience—After rambling half the world over without harm, he is caught like a travell'd woodcock, at his landing.

Clifford. If you ſuſpect Lord Gayville of indiſcretion, why do you not put him candidly to the teſt? I'll be bound for his ingenuouſneſs not to with-hold any confeſſion you may require.

Sir Clement. You may be right, but he'll confeſs more to you in an hour, than to me in a month for all that; come, Clifford, look as you ought to do at your intereſt—Sift him—Watch him—You cannot gueſs how much you will make me your friend, and how grateful I may be if you will diſcover.——

Clifford. Sir, you miſtake the footing upon which Lord Gayville and I live——I am often the partner of his thoughts, but never a ſpy upon his actions.

(Bow and exit.

Sir

Sir Clement. (alone.) Well play'd, Clifford! Good air and emphasis, and well suited to the trick of the scene—He wou'd do, if the practical part of deceit were as easy at his age, as discernment of it is at mine. Gayville and Emily, if they had not a vigilant guard, would be his sure prey; for they are the examples of the generous affections coming to maturity with their stature; while suspicion, art and interest are still dormant in the seed. I must employ Blandish in this business—A rascal of a different cast—Below Clifford in hypocrisy, but greatly above him in the scale of impudence—They shall both forward my ends, while they think they are pursuing their own. I shall ever be sure of a man's endeavours to serve me, while I hold out a lure to his knavery and interest. *[Exit.*

SCENE II. *An Antichamber.*

Alscrip. (without.) Dinner not order'd till seven o'clock—Bid the kitchen maid get me some eggs and bacon—Plague, what with the time of dining and the French cookery, I am in the land of starvation, with half St. James's-Market upon my weekly bills.

Enter (while speaking the last sentence.)

What a change have I made to please my unpleasable daughter? Instead of my regular meal at Furnival's-Inn, here am I transported to Berkley Square, to fast at *Alscrip House* till my fine company come from their morning ride, two hours after dark—Nay it's worse, if I am carried among my great neighbours in Miss Alscrip's suite, as she calls it. My Lady *looks* over me; my Lord walks over me; and sets me in a little tottering cane chair, at the cold corner of the table—Tho' I have a mortgage upon the house and furniture, and arrears due of the whole interest. It's a pleasure tho' to be well dressed. My daughter mantains all fashions are founded in sense—Icod the tightness of my wig, and the stiffness of my cape, give me the sense of the pillory—Plaguy scanty about the hips too—And the breast something of a merry thought reversed—But there is some sense in *that*, for if one sex pares away in proportion where the other swells, we shall take up no more room in the world than we did before.

Enter a Servant.

Servant. Sir, Miss Alscrip wishes to see you. She is at her toilet.

Alſcrip. Who is with her?

Servant. Only Mrs Blandiſh, Sir.

Alſcrip. She muſt content herſelf with that company 'till I have had my whet—order up the eggs and bacon. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

Miſs Alſcrip diſcovered at her toilet. Chignon, (her Valet de Chambre) dreſſing her head. Mrs. Blandiſh. ſitting by and holding a box of diamond pins.

Miſs Alſcrip. And ſo Blandiſh, you really think that the introduction of Otahaite feathers in my trimming ſucceeded?

Mrs. Blandiſh. Oh, with the mixture of thoſe charming Italian flowers, and the knots of pearl that gather'd up the feſtoons, never any thing had ſo happy an effect—It put the whole ball-room out of humour, and that's the ſureſt teſt of good taſte. Monſieur Chignon, that pin a little more to the front.

Miſs Alſcrip. And what did they ſay?

Mrs. Blandiſh. You know it is the firſt ſolicitude of my life to ſee the friend of my heart treated with juſtice—So when you ſtood up to dance, I got into the thick of the circle——Monſieur don't you think this large diamond wou'd be well placed juſt in the middle?

Chignon. Eh! non, Madame; ce na releve pas—Dat give no relief to de weight of de curl—Full in de front un gros bouton von great nob of *diamond*, pardie ce ſeroit un accommodage a' la Polyphème de big eye of de geante in de centre of de forehead.

Miſs Alſcrip. Chignon is right in point of taſte, tho' not quite ſo happy in his alluſions as he is ſometimes.

Chignon. Ah! Madame, you have done von grande injure to my contrie: You go for von monthe, and bring away all de good taſte—At Paris—All von ſide—de diamond, de cap—de glance—de bon mot même—All von ſide, nothing direct à Paris.

Miſs Alſcrip. (Smiling at Chignon, and then turning to Mrs. Blandiſh.) Well!——And ſo——

Mrs. Blandiſh. So it was all admiration! Elegant, ſays Lady Spite—It may do very well for Miſs Alſcrip, who never looks at expence. The dreſs of a bridal princeſs! cries Mrs. Scanty, and for one night's wear too?

Miſs Alſcrip. Delightful! The very language I wiſh'd for—Oh, how charmingly apropos was my accident! did you

you ſee when my trimming in the paſſepied of a cotillion came luckily in contact with Billy Skim's great ſhoe buckle—How it ripp'd away?

Mrs. Blandiſh. *Did* I ſee it?

Miſs Alſcrip. One of the great feathers ſtuck faſt on the ſhoe and looked for all the world like the heel wing of a Mercury in a pantoufine.

Mrs. Blandiſh. Oh! you witty creature, how you deſcribe!

Miſs Alſcrip. It was a moſt becoming rent!

Mrs. Blandiſh. And what a diſplay of indifference; what an example for a woman of fortune, did you exhibit in the buſtle of picking up the ſcattered fragments!

Miſs Alſcrip. When the pearls were trundling about and I inſiſted upon the company being no longer diſturbed, but wou'd leave what remain'd for fairy favours to the maid who ſwept the room. He! he! he!—Do you think Lady Emily wou'd have done that better?

Mrs. Blandiſh. Lady Emily? poor girl!—How ſoon muſt ſhe ſubmit to be the humble ſecond of the family.

Miſs Alſcrip. He! he! he! Do you ſincerely think ſo, Blandiſh? And yet it wou'd be ſtrange if it were otherwiſe, for I cou'd buy her ten-times over.

Chignon. Madame, vat humeure vould you wear to day?

Miſs Alſcrip. Humour! Chignon? What am I dreſſed for now?

Chignon. The parfaite aimable, Madame; but by bringing de point of de hair more down to de eye-brow, or adding a little blowſe to de ſides, I can give you de look ſevere, capricieuſe—vat you pleaſe.———

Miſs Alſcrip. We'll put it off for half an hour, I am not quite decided. I was in the capricieuſe yeſterday—I believe I ſhall keep on the perfect amiable. [*Exit Chignon.*] Tiffany, take off my powdering gown—Ah! ho!—How the wench tugs—do you think you are pulling off the coachman's great coat?

Mrs. Blandiſh. My dear amiable!—do not let that ſweet temper be ruffled———Why will you not employ me in theſe little offices? Delicacy like your's ſhould be waited upon by the ſoftneſs of a ſylph.

[*During this ſpeech Exit Tiffany ſervilh.*]

Miſs Alſcrip. I *am* promiſed a creature to be about me out of the common way.

Mrs. Blandiſh. A new woman?

Miſs

Miſs Alſcrip. No, ſomething to be raiſed much higher, and at the ſame time fitted better to receive one's ill-humour. An humble companion, well born, well educated, and perfectly dependant, is a moſt uſeful appurtenance in the beſt families.

Mrs. Blandiſh. Well, do not raiſe her to the rank of a friend, leſt I ſhould be jealous.

Miſs Alſcrip. You may be perfectly ſecure——I ſhall take particular care that friendſhip ſhall be out of the queſtion on both ſides. I had once thought of a reſtoration of pages to ſit, in ſcarlet and ſilver (as one reads in former times) upon the forepart of the coach, and ſo hold up one's train—but I have a new male attendant in a Valet de Chambre, who has poſſeſſion of my buſt——My two women will have the charge from the point of the ſhoulder to the toe——So my perſon being provided for—the Counteſs of Gayville ſhall have an attendant to wait upon her mind.

Mrs. Blandiſh. I vow a moſt elegant and uncommon thought.

Miſs Alſcrip. One that can pen a note, in the familiar, the punctilious, or the witty—It's quite troubleſome to be writing wit for one's ſelf——But above all ſhe is to have a talent for muſic,

Mrs Blandiſh. Aye, your very ſoul is framed for harmony.

Miſs Alſcrip. I have not quite determin'd what to call her—Governante of the private chamber, keeper of the boudoir with a ſilver key at her breaſt.

Enter Chignon.

Chignon. Madame, a young lady beg to know if you be viſible.

Miſs Alſcrip. A young lady———It is not lady Emily Gayville.

Chignon. Non, Madame; but if you were abſente and I had the adjuſtment of her head, ſhe wou'd be the moſt charmante perſonne I did ever ſee.

Miſs Alſcrip. Introduce her. [*Exit Chignon.*
Who can this be?

Mrs. Blandiſh. Some woman of taſte to enquire your correſpondent at Paris—or—

Enter Miſs Alton.

Miſs Alſcrip curtſying reſpectfully. Miſs Alton retiring diſconcerted.

Miſs

Miſs Alſcrip. Of taſte indeed by her appearance! ——Who's in the anti-chamber? Why did they not open the folding doors?——Chignon, approach a fanteuil for the lady.

Miſs Alton. Madam, I come!—

Miſs Alſcrip. Madam, pray be ſeated———

Miſs Alton. —Excuſe me, Madam———

Miſs Alſcrip. Madam, I muſt beg———

Miſs Alton. Madam, this letter will inform you how little pretenſions I have to the honours you are offering.

Miſs Alſcrip. (reads.) "Miſs Alton, the bearer of "this is the perſon I recommend as worthy the honor "of attending you as a companion *(eyes her ſcornfully.)* She is born a gentlewoman, I dare ſay her ta-"lents and good qualities will ſpeak more in her "favour, than any words I could uſe—I am Madam, "your moſt obedient—um—um—" Blandiſh, was there ever ſuch a miſtake?

Blandiſh. Oh! you dear, giddy, *abſent* creature, what could you be thinking of?

Miſs Alſcrip. Abſent *indeed.* Chignon give *me* the fanteuil, *(throws herſelf into it)* young woman, where were you educated?

Miſs Alton. Chiefly, Madam, with my parents.

Miſs Alſcrip. But finiſh'd, I take it for granted, at a country boarding ſchool; for we have, "young ladies," you know Blandiſh, "boarded and educated," upon blue boards in gold letters in every village; with a ſtrolling player for a dancing maſter, and a deſerter from Dunkirk, to teach the French grammar.

Mrs. Blandiſh. How that genius of your's does paint! nothing eſcapes you—I dare ſay you have anticipated this young lady's ſtory.

Miſs Alton. It is very true, Madam, my life can afford nothing to intereſt the curioſity of you two ladies; it has been too inſignificant to merit your concern, and attended with no circumſtances to excite your pleaſantry.

Miſs Alſcrip. (yawning.) I hope, child, it will be attended with ſuch for the future as will add to your own——I cannot bear a mop about me———I am told you have a talent for muſic—can you touch that harp ——It ſtands here as a piece of furniture, but I have a notion it is kept in tune, by the man who comes to wind up my clocks.

Miſs Alton. Madam, I dare not diſobey you. But I have been us'd to perform before a moſt partial audience; I am afraid ſtrangers will think my talent too humble to be worthy attention.

A SONG.

I.

For tenderneſs framed in life's earlieſt day,
A parent's ſoft ſorrows to mine led the way;
The leſſon of pity was caught from her eye,
And e'er words were my own, I ſpoke in a ſigh.

II.

The nightingale plunder'd, the mate-widow'd dove,
The warbled complaint of the ſuffering grove,
To youth as it ripened gave ſentiment new,
The object ſtill changing, the ſympathy true.

III.

Soft embers of paſſion, yet reſt in the glow—
A warmth of more pain may this breaſt never know!
Or if too indulgent the bleſſing I claim,
Let the ſpark drop from reaſon that weakens the flame.

Miſs Alſcrip. I declare not amiſs, Blandiſh: only a little too plaintive—but I dare ſay ſhe can play a country dance, when the enlivening is required——So Miſs Alton you are welcome to my protection; and indeed I wiſh you to ſtay from this hour———My toilette being nearly finiſh'd, I ſhall have a horrid vacation till dinner.

Miſs Alton. Madam, you do me great honour, and I very readily obey you.

Mrs Blandiſh. I wiſh you joy, Miſs Alton, of the moſt enviable ſituation a young perſon of elegant talents could be raiſed to——You and I will vie with each other to prevent our dear counteſs ever knowing a melancholy hour—She has but one fault to correct—the giving way to the ſoft effuſions of a too tender heart.

Enter Servant.

Servant. Madam, a letter———

Miſs Alſcrip. It's big enough for a ſtate pacquet—Oh! mercy, a petition——for heaven's ſake Miſs Alton look it over. *(Miſs Alton reads)* I ſhould as ſoon read one of lady Newchapel's methodiſt ſermons———What does it contain?

Miſs Alton. Madam, an uncommon ſeries of calamities, which prudence cou'd neither ſee, nor prevent;

the reverſe of a whole family from affluence and content, to miſery and impriſonment; and it adds, that the parties have the honour, remotely, to be allied to you.

Miſs Alſcrip. Female relations! aye, they always think one's made of money.

Miſs Alton. That ſome years ago——

Enter another Servant.

2d Servant. A meſſenger, madam, from the animal repoſitory, with the only puppy of the Peruvians, and the refuſal at twenty guineas.

Miſs Alſcrip. As I live the offspring of the beauteous Aza, who has been ſo long thought paſt hopes of continuing his family! Were he to aſk fifty I muſt have him.

Mrs. Blandiſh. (offering to run out) I vow I'll give him the firſt kiſs.

Miſs Alſcrip. (ſtopping her) I'll ſwear you ſhan't.

Miſs Alton. Madam, I was juſt finiſhing the petition.

Miſs Alſcrip. It's throwing money away——but give him a crown.

[*Exit with Mrs. Blandiſh ſtriving which ſhall be firſt.*]

Miſs Alton. "The ſoft effuſions of a too tender heart." The proof is excellent. That the covetous ſhould be deaf to the miſerable, I can conceive, but I ſhould not have believed, if I had not ſeen, that a taſte for profuſion did not find its firſt indulgence *in benevolence.*

[*Exit.*

End of Act the Second.

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Miſs Alſcrip's dreſſing room continued.*

Miſs Alton.

THANKS to Mrs. Blandiſh's inexhauſtible talent for encomium, I ſhall be relieved from one part of a companion that my nature revolts at. But who comes here? It's well if I ſhall not be expoſed to impertinences I was not aware of.

Enter Chignon (aſide.)

Ma foi, la voila—I will loſe no time to pay my addreſſe——Now for de humble maniere, and de unperplex aſſurance of my contrée *(bowing with French ſtrug) (Miſs Alton turning over new muſic books)* Madamoiſelle,

moiſelle, eſt il permis? may I preſume, to offer you my profounde homage *(Miſs Alton not taking notice)* Madamoiſelle——if you vill put your head into my hands, I vill give a diſtinction to your beauty, that ſhall make you and me, de converſation of all de town.

Miſs Alton. I requeſt Mr. Chignon, you will devote your ambition to your own part of the compliment.

Mr. Alſcrip. (without) Where is my daughter?

Miſs Alton. Is that Mr. Alſcrip's voice, Mr. Chignon? It's aukward for me to meet him before I'm introduc'd.

Chignon. Keep a little behind, Madamoiſelle; he vill only paſſe de room—He vill not ſee through me.

Enter Alſcrip.

Hah, my daughter gone already, but *(ſees Chignon)* there's a new ſpecimen of foreign vermin—A lady's valet de chambre—Taſte for ever!—Now if I was to give the charge of my perſon to a waiting maid, they'd ſay I was indelicate, *(as he croſſes the ſtage, Chignon keeps fidelling to intercept his ſight, and bowing as he looks towards him)* What the devil is Mounſeer at? I thought all his agility lay in his fingers: what anticks is the monkey practiſing? He twiſts and doubles himſelf as if he had a raree-ſhow at his back.

Chignon (aſide.) Be gar no raree-ſhow for you, Monſieur Alſcrip, if I can help.

Alſcrip (ſpying Miſs Alton.) Ah! ah! What have we got there? Monſieur who is that?

Chignon. Sir, my lady wiſh to ſpeak to you in her bondoir. She ſent me to conduct you, Sir.

Alſcrip (imitating.) Yes Sir, but I will firſt conduct myſelf to this lady—Tell me this minute who ſhe is.

Chignon. Sir, ſhe come to live here, companion to my lady—Madamoiſelle ſtudy ſome muſique—ſhe muſt not be diſturb'd

Alſcrip. Get about your buſineſs Monſieur, or I'll diſturb every comb in your head—Go tell my daughter to ſtay till I come to her. I ſhall give her companion ſome cautions againſt ſaucy Frenchmen, ſirrah!

Chignon (aſide.) Cautions! peſte! you are ſubject a' cautions yourſelf—I ſuſpecte you to be von old rake, but no ver dangerous rival. *[Exit.*

Alſcrip. (to himſelf and looking at her with his glaſs) The devil is never tired of throwing baits in my way. I *(She comes forward modeſtly)*

By

By all that's delicious I muſt be better acquainted with her. *He bows. She curtſies, the muſic book ſtill in her hand*) But how to begin—My uſual way of attacking my daughter's maids will never do.

Miſs Alton. (*aſide*) My ſituation is very embarraſſing.

Alſcrip. Beauteous ſtranger, give me leave to add my welcome to my daughter's. Since Alſcrip Houſe was eſtabliſh'd, ſhe never brought any thing into it to pleaſe me before.

Miſs Alton. (*a little confuſed*) Sir, it is a great additional honour to that Miſs Alſcrip has done me, to be thought worthy ſo reſpectable a protection as your's.

Alſcrip. I cou'd furniſh you with a better word than reſpectable. It ſounds ſo diſtant, and my feelings have ſo little to do with cold reſpect——I never had ſuch a deſire ——to make myſelf agreeable.

Miſs Alton. (*aſide*) A very ſtrange old man. (*To him more confuſed*) Sir, you'll pardon me, I believe Miſs Alſcrip is waiting.

Alſcrip. Don't be afraid my dear, enchanting, diffident (zounds what a flutter am I in) don't be afraid—my diſpoſition to be ſure is too ſuſceptible; but then it is likewiſe ſo dove-like, ſo tender, and ſo innocent. Come, play me that tune, and enchant my ear, as you have done my eye.

Miſs Alton. Sir, I wiſh to be excuſed, indeed it does not deſerve your attention.

Alſcrip. Not deſerve it! I had rather hear you, than all the Italians in the Hay-market, even when they ſue the managers, and their purſes chink the ſymphony in Weſtminſter Hall. (*preſenting the harp.*)

Miſs Alton. Sir, it is to avoid the affectation of refuſing what is ſo little worth aſking for. (*Takes the harp and plays a few bars of a lively air. Alſcrip kiſſes her fingers with rapture.*)

Alſcrip. Oh! the ſweet little twiddle-diddles!

Miſs Alton. For ſhame, Sir, what do you mean. (*Alſcrip gets hold of both her hands, and continues kiſſing her fingers.*)

Miſs Alton. (*ſtruggling.*) Help!

Miſs Alſcrip. (*entering.*) I wonder what my papa is doing all this time? (*ſtarts.*) (*A ſhort pauſe.*) *Miſs Alſcrip ſurpriſed. Miſs Alton confuſed. Alſcrip puts his hand to his eye.*

Alſcrip.

Alſcrip. Oh, child! I have got ſomething in my eye, that makes me almoſt mad.——A little midge——I believe.——Gad, I caught hold off this young lady's hands in one of my twitches, and her nerves were as much in a flutter as if I had bit her.

Miſs Alſcrip. (ſignificantly.) Yes, my dear papa, I perceive you *have* ſomething in your eye, and I'll do my beſt to take it out immediately——Miſs Alton, will you do me the favour to walk into the drawing-room?

Miſs Alton I hope, Madam, you will permit me, at a proper opportunity, to give my explanation of what has paſſed. *(Retires.)*

Miſs Alſcrip. There's no occaſion—*(Miſs Alton being out of hearing)* Let it reſt among the catalogue of wonders, like the Glaſtonbury thorn, that blooms at Chriſtmas.—To be ſerious, papa—Though I carried off your behaviour as well as I cou'd, I am really ſhock'd at it—A man of your years, and of a profeſſion where the opinion of the world is of ſuch conſequence——

Alſcrip. My dear Molly, have not I quitted the practice of attorney, and turned fine gentleman, to laugh at the world's opinion; or, had I not, do you ſuppoſe the kiſs of a pretty wench wou'd hurt a lawyer? My dear Molly, if the fraternity had no other reflections to be afraid of!—

Miſs Alſcrip. Oh! hideous, Molly indeed! you ought to have forgot I had a chriſten'd name long ago; am not I going to be a counteſs? If you did not ſtint my fortune, by ſquand'ring your's away upon dirty trulls, I might be call'd your grace.

Alſcrip. Spare your lectures, and you ſhall be call'd your highneſs if you pleaſe.

Enter Servant.

Servant. Madam, lady Emily Gayville is in her carriage in the ſtreet, will your ladyſhip be at home?

Miſs Alſcrip. Yes, ſhew her into the drawing-room. *(Exit Servant.)* I entreat, Sir, you will keep a little more guard upon your paſſions; conſider the dignity of your houſe, and if you muſt be cooing, buy a French figurante. [*Exit.*

Alſcrip. Well ſaid, my lady counteſs! well ſaid quality morals! What am I the better for burying a jealous wife? To be chicken-peck'd is a new perſecution, more provoking than the old one—Oh Molly! Molly!——Plague upon the example of an independent heireſs. [*Exit.*

SCENE

SCENE II. *The Drawing Room.*

Miſs Alton. (alone.) What perplexing ſcenes I already meet with in this houſe? I ought, however, to be contented in the ſecurity it affords againſt the attempts of Heartly. I *am* contented——But, oh Clifford! It was hard to be left alone to the choice of diſtreſſes.

Enter Chignon, introducing Lady Emily.

Chignon. My Lady Emily Gayville——Madame no here! Madamoiſelle, announce if you pleaſe my lady.

Lady Emily (aſide.) Did my ears deceive me? ſurely, I heard the name of Clifford——and it eſcaped in an accent——Pray Sir, who is that? (*to Chignon.*)

Chignon. Madamoiſelle Alton, confidante of my lady, and next, after me, in her ſuite. (*Examines her head dreſs impertinently, Miſs Alton with great modeſty riſes and puts her work together.*)

Lady Emily. There ſeems to be conſiderable difference in the decorum of her attendants. You need not ſtay, Sir.

Chignon. (as he goes out.) Ma foi, ſa tête eſt paſſable——her head may paſs

Lady Emily (aſide.) How my heart beats with curioſity; (*Miſs Alton having diſpos'd her things in her work-bag is retiring with a curtſy.*) Miſs Alton, I am in no haſte. On the contrary, I think the occaſion fortunate that allows me to begin an acquaintance with a perſon of ſo amiable an appearance. I don't know whether that pert foreigner has led me into an error——but without being too inquiſitive, may I aſk if you make any part of this family?

Miſs Alton. Madam, I am under Miſs Alſcrip's protection. I imagine I am repreſented as her dependant: I am not aſhamed of humble circumſtances, that are not the conſequences of indiſcretion.

Lady Emily. That with ſuch claims to reſpect, you ſhould be in any circumſtances of humiliation, is a diſgrace to the age we live in.

Miſs Alton. Madam, my humiliation (if ſuch it be) is juſt. Perhaps I have been too proud, and my heart required this ſelf-correction. A life of retired induſtry might have been more pleaſing to me; but an orphan—a ſtranger—ignorant and diffident, I preferr'd my preſent ſituation as one leſs expoſed to miſrepreſentation. (*Bell rings*) I can no longer detain Miſs Alſcrip from the honour of receiving your Ladyſhip. (*A reſpectful curtſy, and Exit.*)

Lady Emily. There is ſomething ſtrangely myſterious and affecting in all this—what delicacy of ſentiment—what ſoftneſs of manners! and how well do theſe qualities accord with that ſigh for Clifford! ſhe had been proud—proud of what?—of Clifford's love. It is too plain. But then to account for her preſent condition?—He has betrayed and abandoned her—too plain again I fear.—She talked too of a ſelf-corrected heart—take example, Emily, and recal thine from an object, which it ought more than ever to renounce. But here come the Alſcrip and her friend: lud! lud! lud! how ſhall I recover my ſpirits! I muſt attempt it, and if I loſe my preſent thoughts in a trial of extravagance, be it of their's or my own, it will be a happy expedient.

Enter Miſs Alſcrip and Mrs. Blandiſh.

Miſs Alſcrip runs up to Lady Emily and kiſſes her forehead.

Lady Emily. I aſk your pardon, Madam, for being ſo awkward, but I confeſs I did not expect ſo elevated a ſalute.

Miſs Alſcrip. Dear Lady Emily, I had no notion of its not being univerſal. In France, the touch of the lips juſt between the eyebrows has been adopted for years.

Lady Emily. I perfectly acknowledge the propriety of the cuſtom. It is almoſt the only ſpot of the face where the touch wou'd not riſk a confuſion of complexions.

Miſs Alſcrip. He! he! he! what a pretty thought!

Mrs. Blandiſh. How I have long'd for this day!—— Come let me put an end to ceremony, and join the hands of the ſweeteſt pair that ever nature and fortune marked for connection. (*Joins their hands.*)

Miſs Alſcrip. Thank you, my good Blandiſh, tho' I was determined to break the ice, Lady Emily, in the firſt place I met you. But you were not at Lady Doricourt's laſt night.

Lady Emily. (*affectedly.*) No, I went home directly from the Opera: projecting the revival of a cap; read a page in the trials of Temper; went to bed and dream'd I was Belinda in the Rape of the Lock.

Mrs. Blandiſh. Elegant creature.

Miſs Alſcrip. (*aſide*) I muſt have that air, if I die for it. (*Imitating*) I too came home early; ſupped with my old gentleman; made him explain my marriage articles, dower, and heirs entail; read a page in a trial of Divorce, and dream'd of a roſe colour equipage with emblems of Cupids iſſuing out of Coronets.

Mrs.

Mrs. Blandiſh. Oh, you ſweet twins of perfection! what equality in every thing! I have thought of a name for you—The inſeparable inimitables.

Miſs Alſcrip. I declare I ſhall like it exceedingly—one ſees ſo few uncopied originals—the thing I cannot bear.

Lady Emily. Is vulgar imitation——I muſt catch the words from your mouth to ſhew you how we agree.

Miſs Alſcrip. Exactly. Not that one wiſhes to be without affectation.

Lady Emily. Oh! mercy forbid!

Miſs Alſcrip. But to catch a manner, and weave it, as I may ſay, into one's own originality.

Mrs. Blandiſh. Pretty! pretty!

Lady Emily. That's the art—Lord, if one liv'd entirely upon one's own whims, who would not be run out in a twelve-month?

Miſs Alſcrip. Dear Lady Emily, don't you doat upon folly?

Lady Emily. To extacy. I only deſpair of ſeeing it well kept up.

Miſs Alſcrip. I flatter myſelf there is no great danger of that.

Lady Emily. You are miſtaken. We have, it is true, ſome examples of the extravaganza in high life that no other country can match; but withal, many a falſe ſiſter, that ſtarts as one wou'd think, in the very hey day of the fantaſtic, yet comes to a ſtand-ſtill in the midſt of the courſe.

Mrs. Blandiſh. Poor ſpiritleſs creatures!

Lady Emily. Do you know there is more than one ducheſs who has been ſeen in the ſame carriage with her huſband——like two doves in a baſket in the print of Conjugal Felicity; and another has been detected! I almoſt bluſh to name it.

Mrs. Blandiſh. Bleſs us, where? and how? and when?

Lady Emily. In nurſing her own child.

Miſs Alſcrip. Oh! barbariſm!——For heaven's ſake let us change the ſubject. You were mentioning a reviv'd cap, Lady Emily; any thing of the Henry quatre?

Lady Emily. Quite different. An Engliſh mob under the chin, and artleſs ringlets in natural colour, that ſhall reſtore an admiration for Prior's Nut Brown Maid.

Miſs Alſcrip. Horrid! ſhocking!

Lady Emily. Abſolutely neceſſary. To be different from the reſt of the world, we muſt now revert to nature:

Make haſte, or you have ſo much to undo, you will be left behind.

Miſs Alſcrip. I dare ſay ſo. But who can vulgarize all at once? What will the French ſay?

Lady Emily. We are to have an interchange of faſhions and follies upon a baſis of unequivocal reciprocity.

Miſs Alſcrip. Faſhions and follies——oh, what a promiſing manufacture!

Lady Emily. Yes, and one, thank heaven, that we may defy the edict of any Potentate to prohibit.

Miſs Alſcrip. (with an affected droop of her lip in her laugh) He! he! he! he! he! he!

Lady Emily. My dear Miſs Alſcrip, what are you doing? I muſt correct you as I love you. Sure you muſt have obſerved the drop of the under lip is exploded ſince Lady Simpermode broke a tooth—(*Sets her mouth affectedly*)—I am preparing the caſt of the lips for the enſuing winter—thus it is to be called the Paphian mimp.

Miſs Alſcrip. (imitating) I ſwear I think it pretty—I muſt try to get it.

Lady Emily. Nothing ſo eaſy. It is done by one cabaliſtical word like a metamorphoſis in the fairy tales. You have only, when before your glaſs, to keep pronouncing to yourſelf nimini-primini—the lips cannot fail of taking their plie.

Miſs Alſcrip. Nimini-pimini—imini, mimini—oh, it's delightfully enfantine—and ſo innocent, to be kiſſing one's own lips.

Lady Emily. You have it to a charm—does it not become her infinitely, Mrs. Blandiſh?

Mrs. Blandiſh. Our friend's feature muſt ſucceed in every grace; but never ſo much as in a quick change of extremes.

Enter Servant.

Madam, Lord Gayville deſires to know if you are at home?

Miſs Alſcrip. A ſtrange formality!

Lady Emily. (aſide) No brother ever came more opportunely to a ſiſter's relief, "I have fool'd it to the top of my bent."

Miſs Alſcrip. Deſire Miſs Alton to come to me. *(Exit Servant)* Lady Emily you muſt not blame me; I am ſupporting the cauſe of our ſex, and muſt puniſh a lover for ſome late inattentions—I ſhall not ſee him.

Lady

Lady Emily. Oh cruel! *(Sees Miſs Alton who enters.)* Miſs Alſcrip you have certainly the moſt elegant companion in the world.

Miſs Alſcrip. Dear, do you think ſo? an ungain, dull ſort of a body, in my mind; but we'll try her in the preſent buſineſs. Miſs Alton, you muſt do me a favour. I want to plague my huſband that is to be——you muſt take my part—you muſt *double me* like a ſecond actreſs at *Paris*, when the firſt has the vapours.

Miſs Alton. Madam!

Miſs Alſcrip. Oh never look alarmed—It is only to convey my refuſal of his viſit, and to ſet his alarms afloat a little—particularly with jealouſy, that's the maſter torment.

Miſs Alton. Really Madam, the taſk you wou'd impoſe upon me—

Miſs Alſcrip. Will be a great improvement to *you*, and quite right for me. Teaſe—teaſe, and tame, is a rule without exception from the keeper of the lions to the teacher of a piping bulfinch.

Mrs. Blandiſh. But you hard hearted thing, will you name any object for his jealouſy?

Miſs Alſcrip. No, keep him there in the dark—Always keep your creature in the dark—That's another ſecret of taming—Don't be grave, Lady Emily.—*(whoſe attention is fixed on Miſs Alton)* Your brother's purgatory ſhall be ſhort, and I'll take the reconciliation ſcene upon myſelf.

Lady Emily (endeavouring to recover herſelf.) I cannot but pity him; eſpecially as I am ſure, that do what you will, he will always regard you with the ſame eyes. And ſo, my ſweet ſiſter, I leave him to your mercy, and to that of your repreſentative, whoſe diſpoſition, if I have any judgment, is ill ſuited to a taſk of ſeverity.

Mrs. Blandiſh. Dear Lady Emily carry me away with you. When a lover is coming, it ſhall never be ſaid I am in the way.

Lady Emily. I am at your orders *(looking at Miſs Alton. (aſide)* what a ſuſpence am I to ſuffer? a moment more and I ſhall betray myſelf—adieu Miſs Alſcrip.

Miſs Alſcrip. Call Lady Emily's Servants.

Lady Emily. You ſha'n't ſtir—remember nimini—primini [*Exit.*

Mrs. Blandiſh. (Coming back and ſqueeſing Miſs Alſcrip's hand, in half a whiſper.) She'd give her eyes to be like you. [*Exit.*

Miſs Alſcrip. Now for it, Miſs Alton—Only remember that you are doubling *me* the woman he adores.

Miſs Alton. Indeed, Madam, I am quite incapable of executing your orders to your ſatisfaction. The utmoſt I can undertake is a ſhort meſſage.

Miſs Alſcrip. Never fear. *(Knock at the door.)* There he comes—Step aſide and I'll give you your very words.

Enter Lord Gayville, conducted by a ſervant.

Lord Gayville. So, now to get through this piece of drudgery. There's a meanneſs in my proceeding, and my compunction is juſt. Oh, the dear loſt poſſeſſor of my heart! loſt, irrecoverably loſt!

Enter Miſs Alton from the bottom of the Scene.

Miſs Alton. A pretty employment I am ſent upon.

Lord Gayville. (to himſelf.) Could ſhe but know the ſacrifice I am ready to make?

Miſs Alton. (to herſelf.) The very picture of a lover, if abſence of mind marks one. It is unpleaſant for me to interrupt a man I never ſaw, but I ſhall deliver my meſſage very conciſely.——My Lord.——

Lord Gayville. (turning) Madam, *both ſtart and ſtand in ſurprize)* Aſtoniſhment! Miſs Alton! my charming fugitive!

Miſs Alton. How! Mr. Heartly—Lord Gayville!

Lord Gayville. My joy and my ſurprize are alike unutterable. But I conjure you, Madam, tell me by what ſtrange circumſtance do I meet you here?

Miſs Alton. (*aſide*) Now aſſiſt me, honeſt pride!—aſſiſt me reſentment.

Lord Gayville. You ſpoke to me—Did you know me?

Miſs Alton. No otherwiſe, my Lord, than as Miſs Alſcrip's lover. I had a meſſage from her to your lordſhip.

Lord Gayville. For heaven's ſake, Madam, in what capacity?

Miſs Alton. In one, my Lord, not very much above the claſs of a ſervant.

Lord Gayville. Impoſſible, ſure!—It is to place the brilliant below the foil—to make the inimitable work of nature ſecondary to art and deceit.

Miſs Alton. It is to take refuge in a ſituation that offers me ſecurity againſt ſuſpicious obligation; againſt vile deſign; againſt the attempts of a ſeducer—It is to exerciſe the patience, that the will, and perhaps the favour of heaven, meant to try.

Lord

Lord Gayville. Cruel, cruel to yourſelf and me—Could I have had a happineſs like that of aſſiſting you againſt the injuſtice of fortune—and when to be thus degraded was the alternative.—

Miſs Alton. My Lord, it is fit I ſhould be explicit. Reflect upon the language you have held to *me*; view the character in which you preſent yourſelf to this family; and then pronounce in whoſe breaſt we muſt look for a ſenſe of degradation.

Lord Gayville. In mine and mine alone. I confeſs it—Hear nevertheleſs my defence—*My* actions are all the reſult of love. And culpable as I may ſeem, my conſcience does not reproach me with——

Miſs Alton. Oh, my Lord, I readily believe you—You are above it's reproaches—Qualities that are infamous and fatal, in one claſs of life, create applauſe and conſcientious ſatisfaction in another.

Lord Gayville. Infamous and fatal Qualities! What means my lovely accuſer?

Miſs Alton. That to ſteal or ſtab is death in common life: but when one of your Lordſhip's degree ſets his hard heart upon the deſtruction of a woman, how glorious is his ſucceſs! How conſummate his triumph! When he can follow the theft of her affections by the murder of her honour.

Miſs Alſcrip enters ſofily behind.

Miſs Alſcrip. I wonder how it goes on.

Lord Gayville. Exalted! Adorable woman!

Miſs Alſcrip. Adorable! Aye, I thought how 'twou'd be!

Lord Gayville. Hear me! I conjure you—

Miſs. Alſcrip. Not a word if ſhe knows her buſineſs.

Miſs Alton. My Lord! I have heard too much.

Miſs Alſcrip. Bravo! I could not have play'd it better myſelf.

Lord Gayville. Oh! ſtill more charming than ſevere. [*Kneels.*

Miſs Alſcrip. Humph! I hope he means me though.

Lord Gayville. The character in which you ſee me here, makes me appear more odious to myſelf if poſſible, than I am to you.

Miſs Alſcrip. (*behind*) By all that's treacherous I doubt it.

Miſs Alton. Deſiſt my Lord——Miſs Alſcrip has a claim——

Miſs

Miſs Alſcrip. Aye, now for it.

Lord Gayville. By heaven ſhe is my averſion. It is my family on whom I am dependant that has betray'd me into theſe curſed addreſſes—Accept my contrition—pity a wretch ſtruggling with the complicated torments of paſſion, ſhame, penitence and deſpair.

Miſs Alſcrip (*comes forward* (*all ſtand confuſed*) I never ſaw a part better doubled in my life!

Lord Gayville. Confuſion! What a light do I appear in to them both. How ſhall I redeem myſelf, even in my own opinion?

Miſs Alſcrip (*looking at Lord Gayville*) Expreſſive dignity (*looking at Miſs Alton*) Sweet ſimplicity! Amiable diffidence! — "She ſhould execute my commands moſt "aukwardly."

Lord Gayville. (*aſide*) There is but one way.— (*to Miſs Alſcrip.*) Madam, your ſudden entrance has effected a diſcovery which with ſhame I confeſs ought to have been made before — The lady who ſtands there is in poſſeſſion of my heart. If it is a crime to adore her, I am the moſt guilty wretch on earth — pardon me if you can; my ſincerity is painful to me—But in this criſis it is the only atonement I can offer. [*Bows and Exit.*

Miſs Alſcrip. (*after a pauſe*) Admirable! — Perfect! The moſt finiſh'd declaration I am convinc'd, that ever was made from beggarly nobility to the woman who was to make his fortune—the Lady who ſtands there—the lady—Madam—I am in patient expectation for the ſincerity of your ladyſhip's atonement.

Miſs Alton. I am confounded at the ſtrange occurrences that have happen'd; but be aſſured you ſee in me an innocent and moſt *unwilling* rival.

Miſs Alſcrip. Rival! Better and better!—You—you give me uneaſineſs! You moppet—you coquet of the ſide table to catch the gawkey heir of the family, when he comes from ſchool at Chriſtmas—You—you—you vile ſeducer of my good old honour'd father! (*cries*) (*in a paſſion again*) What, is my Lady dumb? Huſſey? Have you the inſolence to hold your tongue.

Miſs Alton. Madam, I juſt now offer'd to juſtify this ſcene; I thought it the part of duty to myſelf, and reſpect to you. But your behaviour has now left but one ſentiment upon my mind.

Miſs

Miſs Alſcrip. And what is that, Madam?

Miſs Alton. (With pointed expreſſion) Scorn. [*Exit.*

Miſs Alſcrip. Was there ever any thing like this before—and to a woman of my fortune—I to be robb'd of a lover—and that a poor Lord too—I'll have the act reviv'd againſt witchcraft; I'll have the minx tried—I'll—I'll—I'll verify the proverb of the tragedy——

Hell has no fury like a woman ſcorn'd. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *Alſcrip's room of Buſineſs.*

Alſcrip and Rightly.

Rightly. Upon all theſe matters, Mr. Alſcrip, I am authorized by my client, Sir Clement, Flint, to agree. There remains nothing but your favouring me with the inſpection of the Charlton title deeds, and your daughter's ſettlements may be engroſſed.

Alſcrip. I cannot conceive my friend Rightly, any ſuch inſpection to be requiſite. Have not I been in conſtant quiet poſſeſſion?

Rightly. Sir Clement inſiſts upon it.

Alſcrip. A client inſiſt! and you an old practitioner, ſuffer ſuch a demur to your infallibility!—Ah! in my practice I had the ſure means of diſappointing ſuch dabblers and divers into their own caſes.

Rightly. How, pray?

Alſcrip. I read his writings to him myſelf—I was the beſt reader in Chancery-lane for ſetting the underſtanding at defiance—drew breath but once in a quarter of an hour, always in the wrong place, and made a ſingle ſentence of ſix ſkins of Parchment—Shall I give you a ſpecimen?

Rightly. (ſmiling) I have no doubt of your talent.

Alſcrip. Then return to Sir Clement, and follow my example.

Rightly. No, Mr. Alſcrip, tho' I acknowledge your ſkill, I do not ſubſcribe to your doctrine. The Engliſh law is the fineſt ſyſtem of ethics as well as government, that ever the world produced, and it cannot be too generally underſtood.

Alſcrip. Law underſtood! Zounds would you deſtroy the profeſſion?

Rightly. No, I would raiſe it. Had every man of ſenſe the knowledge of the *theory*, to which he is competent;

the practice would revert the purity of it's inſtitution, maintain the *rights*, and not promote the knavery of mankind.

Alſcrip. (aſide) Plaguy odd maxims.—Sure he means to try me.—*(to him)* Brother Rightly, we know the world, and are alone——I have lock'd the door *(in a half whiſper)*

Rightly. A very uſeleſs precaution. I have not a principle nor a proceeding that I would not proclaim at Charing-croſs.

Alſcrip. (aſide) No! then I'll pronounce you the moſt ſilly, or the moſt impudent fellow of the fraternity.

Rightly. But where are theſe writings? You can have no difficulty in laying your hand upon them, for I perceive you keep things in a diſtinguiſh'd regularity.

Alſcrip. Yes, I have diſtinct repoſitories for all papers, and eſpecially title deeds—Some in drawers—Some in cloſets—*(aſide)* and a few under ground.

Miſs Alſcrip. (rattling at the door.) What makes you lock the door, Sir? I muſt ſpeak to you this inſtant.

Alſcrip. One moment child, and I'll be ready for you. *(Turning again to Rightly as to diſſuade him.)*

Miſs Alſcrip. (*Still rattling at the door.*) Don't tell me of moments—let me in.

Alſcrip. Wheugh! What impatient devil poſſeſſes the girl—Stay a moment I tell you—*(Turns again to Rightly.)*

Rightly. (coolly.) If the thoughts of the wedding-day makes any part of the young lady's impatience, you take a bad way, Mr. Alſcrip, to ſatisfy it; for I tell you plainly our buſineſs cannot be compleated till I ſee theſe writings.

Alſcrip. (aſide.) Confound the old hound—how he ſticks to his ſcent.

Miſs Alſcrip, ſtill at the door.

Alſcrip. I am coming I tell you. *(Opens a bureau in a confuſed hurry ſhuffles papers about, puts one into Rightly's hand.)* There, if this whim muſt be indulged, ſtep into the next room—You who know the material Parts of a parchment lie in a nutſhell, will look it over in ten minutes. *(Puts him into another room.)*

Miſs Alſcrip. I won't wait another inſtant whatever you are about—Let me in——

Alſcrip. (opening the door.) Sex and vehemence! What is the matter now?

Enter

Enter Miſs Alſcrip, in the moſt violent emotion.

Miſs Alſcrip. So, Sir; yes, Sir; you have done finely by me indeed, you are a pattern for fathers——a precious match you have provided. *(Walking about.*

Alſcrip. What the devil's the matter?

Miſs Alſcrip. (running on) I that with 50,000 independent pounds left myſelf in a father's hands——a thing unheard of, and waited for a huſband with unparrelled patience till I was of age——

Alſcrip. What the devil's the matter?

Miſs Alſcrip (following him about.) I that at fourteen might have married a French Marquis, my governeſs told me he was—for all he was her brother.——

Alſcrip. Gad a mercy governeſs!

Miſs Alſcrip. And as for commoners, had not I the choice of the market? And the handſome Iriſh Colonel at Bath, that had carried off ſix heireſſes before, for himſelf and friends, and wou'd have found his way to Getnagreen blind-fold!

Alſcrip. (aſide) Gad I wiſh you were there now with all my heart.——What the devil is at the bottom of all this?

Miſs Alſcrip. Why Lord Gayville is at the bottom ——And your huſſey that you were ſo ſweet upon this morning, is at the bottom! a treacherous minx!——I ſent her only for a little innocent diverſion as my double—

Alſcrip. Your what?

Miſs. Alſcrip. Why my double to vex him.

Alſcrip. Double! this is the moſt uſeleſs attendant you have had yet——Gad I'll ſtart you ſingle handed in the art of vexation againſt any ten women in England.

Miſs Alſcrip. I caught them, juſt as I did you.

Alſcrip. Is that all? Gad I don't ſee much in that.

Miſs Alſcrip. Not much? what, a woman of my fortune and accompliſhments turn'd off—rejected——renounc'd

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Alſcrip. How! renounc'd? has he broke the contract! ——Will you prove he has broke the contract?

Miſs Alſcrip. Aye. Now my dear papa, you take a tone that becomes you; now the blood of the Alſcrip's riſes;—riſes, as it ought; you mean to fight him directly, don't you?

Alſcrip. Oh yes, I am his man——I'll ſhew you a lawyer's challenge: ſticks and ſtaves, guns, ſwords, dag-

gers, poinards, knives, ſciſſars and bodkins. I'll put more weapons into a bit of paper, ſix inches ſquare than would ſtock the armory of the tower.

Miſs Alſcrip. Piſtols——Don't talk to me of any thing but piſtols,——my dear papa, who ſhall be your ſecond?

Alſcrip. I'll have two——John Doe, and Richard Roe ——as pretty fellows as any in England to ſee fair play, and as us'd to the differences of good company.——They ſhall greet him with their *fieri facias*——ſo don't be caſt down, Molly, I'll anſwer for damages to indemnify our loſs of temper and reputation——he ſhall have a *fi-fa* before to morrow night.

Miſs Alſcrip. Fiery faces and damages——What does your Weſtminſter-hall gibberiſh mean?—Are a woman's feeling's to be ſatisfied with a fie-fa——you old inſenſible —you have no ſenſe of family honour——no tender affections.

Alſcrip. Gad you have enough for us both, when you want your father to be ſhot through the head——but ſtand out of the way, here's a ſpecies of family honour more neceſſary to be taken care of——If we were to go to law, this would be a precious ſet off againſt us. *(Takes up the deed as if to lock it up.)* This—why what the devil—I hope I don't ſee clear—Curſe and confuſion, I have given the wrong one—Here's fine work—Here's a blunder—Here's the effect of a woman's impetuoſity.

Miſs Alſcrip. Lord, what a fuſs you are in; what is in the old trumpery ſcroll?

Alſcrip. Plague and parchment, old Rightly will find what's in it, if I don't interrupt him—Mr. Rightly—Mr. Rightly—Mr. Rightly—*(going to the door Rightly went out at.)*

Enter Servant.

Servant. Sir, Mr. Rightly is gone.

Alſcrip. Gone! whither?

Servant. Home, I believe, Sir—He came out at the door into the hall, and bade me tell your honor you might depend upon his reading over the deed with particular care.

Alſcrip. Fire, and fury, my hat and cane—*(Exit Servant.)* Here, my hat and cane *(ſtamps about.)*

Miſs Alſcrip. Sir, I expect, before you come home

Alſcrip. Death and devils, expect to be ruin'd——this comes

comes of liſt'ning to you—The ſex hold the power of miſchief by preſcription — Zounds — Miſchief—Miſchief—is the common law of womankind. [*Exit in a rage.*

Miſs Alſcrip. Mercy on us—I never ſaw him more provok'd, even when my mother was alive. [*Exit.*

End of the Third Act.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Alſcrip's room.*

Chignon.

QUE diable vent dire tout ca—vat devil all dis mean? —Monſieur Alſcrip enrage'—Madamoiſelle Alſcrip fly about like de dancing fury at de Opera——My little muſicienne, ſhut up, and in de abſence of Madame, I keep de key of de little baſtile—By gad, I vou'd rather have de cuſtody of my pretty priſoniere than the whole college of cardinals——but vat have we here?

Enter Sir Clement and Clifford.

Sir Clement. (ſpeaking to a ſervant) Mr. Alſcrip not at home, no matter——we'll wait his return——The French Valet de Chambre *(to Clifford)*——It may be of uſe to make acquaintance with him——Monſieur, how do you like this country?

Chignon Ver good contree Sire, by and bye——when you grow a little more poor.

Sir Clement. Is that a Pariſian rule for improvement?

Chignon. Yes, Sir, and we help you to follow our example——In good times you hang, and you drown—— In bad time you vill be like us.———Alway poor alway gay—forget your politics—laugh at your grievances—take your ſnuff, vive la diſſipation,——ver good country.

Sir Clement. Thanks for your kind advice, Monſieur, you Frenchmen are ſo obliging, and ſo communicative to ſtrangers——I hear there is a young lady come into this family——we don't exactly know in what capacity—— could not you contrive that ſhe ſhou'd paſs through this room——or———

Chignon. (aſide) By gar here be one more old rake after de little muſicienne.

Sir Clement. Only for curiosity,—we never saw her, and have particular reasons——*(gives money)*.

Chignon. Ma foi, your reasons be very expressive *(aside)* —but vat devil shall I do—open de cage of my little rossignol——my pretty nightingale——no. Chignon—no ——*(looking out)* ah, hah! La Tiffany——Now for de politique——begar I undertake your business——and make you de dupe of de performance.

[Exit with a sign to Sir Clement.

Sir Clement. So—Clifford —— There goes as disinterested a fellow now as any in Europe——But hark you ——Can you yet guess the purpose for which I brought you here?

Clifford. I profess, Sir, I am in the dark. If it concerns Lord Goyville's secret——

Sir Clement. Namely, that I have discovered, without your assistance, that this Dulcinea has started up in the shape of Miss Allcrip's musical companion——Her name is Alton, *(showing)* I tell it you, because I am sure you did not know it——or if you had——a friend's secret ought to be sacred; and to keep it from the only person, who by knowing it could save him from destruction, would be a new exercise of your virtue.

Clifford. Sir, you will not know me,——

Sir Clement. Tut, tut, don't do me such injustice—— Come, all delicacy being over by my having made the discovery, will you talk to this girl?

Clifford. For what end, Sir?

Sir Clement. If you state yourself as Lord Goyville's friend, she will converse with you more readily, than she wou'd with me——Try her—find out what she is really at——If she proves an impostor of the refined artifice I suspect, that puts on humility to vail her purpose, and chastity to effect it——leave her to me——if she has no hold upon him but her person, I shall be easy.

Clifford. Sir, let my compliance convince you how much I wish to oblige you. If I can get a sight of this wonder, I promise to give you my faithful opinion of my friend's danger.

Enter Chignon and makes a sign to Sir Clement, that the person he enquir'd after is coming.

Sir Clement. Leave her with this gentleman——Come Monsieur, you shall shew me the new room.

Chignon. (aside) Vid dis gentleman—Vid all my heart—

La Tiffany

La Tiffany vill anſwer his purpoſe, and mine too.
[*Exit. Clifford is looking at the furniture of the room.*

Enter Tiffany.

Tiffany. What does the Frenchman mean by gentlemen wanting me, and his gibberiſh of making ſoft eyes—I hope I know the exerciſe of my eyes without his inſtruction ——hah! I vow, a clever looking man.

Clifford. (ſeeing Tiffany.) A good ſmart girl; but not altogether quaker-like in her apparel, nor does her air quite anſwer my conception of a goddeſs.

Tiffany. (aſide,) how he examines me! ſo much the better—I ſhall looſe nothing by that, I believe.

Clifford. Faith a pretty attracting countenance——but for that apprehenſive and timid look—that awe inſpiring modeſty, my friend ſo forcibly deſcrib'd.

[Tiffany adjuſts herſelf and ſmiles at him.]

Clifford. (aſide) There is no judging of that wonderful ſex by rational rules——Her ſilence marks diſtruſt; deuce take me if I know how to begin for fear of offending her reſerve.

Tiffany. (aſide.) I have been told pertneſs became me—I'll try, I'm reſolv'd. *(to him.)* I hear, Sir, you had ſomething to ſay to a young perſon of this houſe—that—that—*(looking down at the ſcore now artfully.)* I can't get but take the deſcription to myſelf——I am ready to hear any thing a gentleman has to ſay.

Clifford. (aſide.) Thank my ſtars, my ſcruples are relieved.

Tiffany. Am I miſtaken, Sir? Pray whom was you enquiring after.

Clifford. Oh! certainly you, my pretty ſtranger. A friend of mine has been robb'd of his heart, and I ſee the felony in your looks.

Tiffany. (ſimpering and coquetting.) Lord, Sir, if I had ſuſpected you had come with a ſearch warrant for hearts, I ſhou'd have been more upon my guard.

Clifford. (chucking her under the chin.) Will you confeſs, or muſt I arreſt you?

Tiffany. Innocent, Sir, in fact, but not quite ſo in inclination. I hope your own is ſafe.

Clifford. And were it not, my ſmart inconſcionable, would you run away with that alſo?

Tiffany. Oh yes, and an hundred more; and melt them all down together as the Jews do, ſtolen goods to prevent

their being reclaim'd—Gold, silver and lead; pray, Sir, of what metal may your's be?

Clifford. (*aside.*) Astonishing! have I hit upon the moment when her fancy outruns her art!—Or has it been Gayville's amusement to describe her by contraries? And are you really the young Lady that is the companion of Miss Alscrip, that makes such conquests at first sight.

Tiffany. Sir, if you mean the young Lady who has been named, however undeservedly, the flower of this family; that appears sometimes at these windows; and to be sure has been followed home by gentlemen against her inclinations—Sir, you are not mistaken.

Clifford. (*aside.*) It has been Gayville's madness or amusement then to describe her by contraries.

Tiffany. I hope, Sir, you are not offended, I wou'd not be impertinent, tho' I am not so tasteless as to shy.

Clifford. Offended, my dear? I am quite charm'd I assure you. You are just what I did not expect, but wished to find you. You had been represented to me so improperly.———

Tiffany. (*with pertness.*) Represented improperly! Pray, Sir, what do you mean?

Clifford. To rejoice in my mistake I promise you—Nay, and to set my friend right in his opinion, and so without further shyness on either part, let us be free upon the subject I had to talk over with you. You surely are not looking to lasting connections.

Tiffany. (*with airs.*) Sir, I don't understand you—I am not what you suppose, I assure you—Connections indeed—I should never have thought of that—my character—my behaviour, connections, I don't know what the word signifies.

Sir Clement. (*without*) Clifford—are you ready?

Clifford. I am at your orders, Sir.

Tiffany. (*aside.*) Deuce take this interruption!

Sir Clement. (*without*) I shall not wait for Mr. Alscrip any longer

Tiffany. (*aside.*) Lud, lud, he gives me no time to come round again. (*Runs up to him confusedly.*) It's very true, Sir, I would not do such a thing for the world, but you are a man of honour, and I am sure wou'd not give bad advice to a poor girl who is but a novice—and, so, Sir. (*Hears Sir Clement entering.*) Put your proposal in writing and you may depend on having an answer. [*Runs out.*

Enter

Enter Sir Clement.

Sir Clement. Well, Clifford, what do you think of her?

Clifford. Make yourself perfectly easy, Sir: This girl when known can make no impression on Lord Gayville's mind; and I doubt not but a silk gown and a lottery ticket, had they been offer'd as an ultimatum, wou'd have purchased her *person*.

Sir Clement. (*With a dry sneer*) Don't you sometimes, Clifford, form erroneous opinions of peoples' pretensions? interest and foolish passion inspire strange notions—as one or the other prevails, we are brought to look so low, or so high——

Clifford. (*With emotion.*) That we are compell'd to call reason and honour to our aid——

Sir Clement. And then——

Clifford. We lose the intemperance of our inclinations in the sense of what is right.

Sir Clement. (*aside.*) Sententious impostor! (*to him*) But to the point.

Clifford. Sir, I would please you, if I cou'd—I am thinking of a scheme to restore Lord Gayville to his senses, without violence or injury to any one of the parties.

Sir Clement. Let me hear it.

Clifford. Why the wench being cut short of marketing by word of mouth (which she was doing in all due form when you came in) desired me to write proposals. I am inclined to do so. We will shew the answer to Lord Gayville, and depend upon it, there will be character enough display'd to cure him of the sentimental part of his attachment.

Sir Clement. I like your idea—Sit down and put it into execution immediately—— [*Clifford writes.*

Sir Clement. (*to himself*) He is quick at invention—has a pretty turn at profession—A proud and peremptory shew of honour that wou'd overpower prejudices—Thank heaven, my opinions of knavery are convictions.

Clifford. (*Writing.*) I am sorry to detain you, Sir.

Sir Clement. (*Looking at the furniture.*) Oh! I am amusing myself better than you think—Indulging an edifying contemplation among the tombs of departed estates—(*Looking round the furniture, viz. closets that shew old-fashioned tops tied up, shelves with boxes labelled mortgages, bags and*

and release, &c.) What mouldered skins that will never see day-light again, and that with a good herald wou'd vie with Westminster abbey in holiday entertainment. For instance now, what have we here?——Hah! the last remains of Fatland priory——Once of great monastic importance: A proverb of pride, sloth, and hypocrisy. After the reformation the seat of old English hospitality and benevolence——In the present century, altered, adorned, pull'd down and the materials sold by auction.

Clifford. Edifying indeed, Sir; your comments are not lost.

Sir Clement. Here lie undisturb'd in dust, the relicts of Court-baron castle, granted at the conquest to the family of Lostimount. The last of this ancient race having won twenty-seven king's plates, and represented the county in six parliaments, after many struggles died of the pitiful fever—a disconsolate annuitant inscrib'd this boast to his memory.

Clifford. Ha! ha! ha! (*Rising.*) I am quite concern'd to interrupt you, Sir, but you shall hear my letter (*reads*) "You have captivated a young man of rank "and fortune, but you are discover'd, and his ruin "and yours wou'd be the consequence of pursuing "any designs, that could impede his proposed marriage "with Miss Allcrip—Throw yourself upon the generosity "of his family, and your fortune's made—Send your answer (and let it be immediate) to me at Sir Clement "Flint's house—Yours, &c. &c."

HARRY CLIFFORD.

Sir Clement. It will do very well, our French friend is the man to deliver it, and to bring the answer. I am going home, you'll overtake me. [*Exit.*

Enter Chignon.

Clifford. (*Sealing the letter*) You come apropos, Monsieur (*gives the letter with an air of mystery.*) Have the goodness to put this letter into Miss Alton's own hands.

Chignon. (*to himself*) Mademoiselle Alton! Peste! My trick has not succeed.

Clifford. To Miss Alton by herself—I am in all the haste.

Chignon. (*to himself.*) Devil take Tiffany for making you so wise.

Clifford. him

Clifford. And you ſerve your Lady, when you ſerve me with Miſs Alton—Monſieur, an anſwer as quick as poſſible—You will find me at Sir Clement Flint's—it is only in the next ſtreet—and—you underſtand me—— *(ſhaking his purſe.)* Allons, *Monſieur.* [*Exit.*

Chignon. Underſtand you—Oui! da you talk de lan guage univerſal *(imitating his ſhaking the purſe.)* Pentre vois, I begin to ſee ſomething—By gad I vill give de letter, and try de inclination of Madamoiſelle la Muſicienne—if dis be de duette ſhe vill play, it take her out of the vay of Alſcrip, of Gayville, and of myſelf alſo—Voila le malheur—there—de misfortune—eh bien—when love and intereſt come acroſs—alway prefer de intereſt for to-day and take de chance of de love to-morrow—dat is de humour of France. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *Sir Clement Flint's houſe.*

Enter Lord Gayville and Sir Clement.

Lord Gayville, I am reſolved to ſee *Miſs* Alſcrip no more.

Sir Clement. And I hope you are prepared with argu ments to juſtify the cauſe of this breach, to me, and to the world.

Lord Gayville. For my reconciliation with you I hope your former partiality will return to my aid; and as for the world I deſpiſe it. The multitude look at happineſs thro' the falſe glare of wealth and pomp: I have diſcovered it, tho' yet at a diſtance, through the only true medium, that of mutual affection.

Sir Clement. No common place book formed from a whole library of plays and novels could furniſh a better ſentence. Your folly wou'd ſhame a ſchool boy—even of the laſt age—In the preſent he learns the world with his grammar, and gets a juſt notion of the worthleſſneſs of the other ſex before he is of an age to be duped by their attractions.

Lord Gayville. Sir, your prejudices——

Sir Clement. My prejudices?—will you appeal to Clifford—here he comes—your friend—your——

Enter Clifford.

Lord Gayville. And will Clifford, condemn the choice of the heart?

Clifford. Never, my lord, when juſtly placed—In this caſe I perceive you are arguing, I am ready to bluſh for

you

—nay, don't look grave—I am acquainted with your inchantress.

Lord Gayville. You acquainted with her?

Clifford. Yes, and if I don't deceive myself, shall make her break her own spell. I am in correspondence with her.

Lord Gayville. You in correspondence with Miss Alton! —when? where? What am I to think of this?

Clifford. My dear Lord, that she is the most errant coquette, the most accomplished jilt, the most ready trafficker of her charms———

Lord Gayville. Phrenzy and profanation—Such dignity of virtue, such chastity of sentiment———

Sir Clement. Ha! ha! ha!

Clifford. Phrenzy indeed! You have formed a creature of imagination, and like a true Quixote think it real; you have talked to her of dignity, of virtue and chastity, of sentiment, till you have taught her a lure she never dreamt of—Had you treated her at first as I did, she wou'd have put a card into your hand to inform you of her lodging

Lord Gayville. Clifford, what has betray'd you into calumny so unwarrantable and despicable?

Sir Clement. Come, Gayville, I'll be plain with you, you have fillily let the girl raise her price upon you—but if nothing else will satisfy you, e'en pay it, and have done with her.

Lord Gayville. Sir, her price is an unadulterated heart: I am afraid we cannot pay it betwixt us.

Enter Chignon (delivers a letter to Clifford apart.)

Chignon. Altere, Monsieure, I repete your word—Madamoiselle Alton, be all your own.

Sir Clement. Come, Clifford, the contents: his Lordship braves the trial.

Lord Gayville. What is this mighty scheme? and what is that paper to discover?

Clifford. (breaking open the letter) Your Lordship shall be informed word for word. *(Upon first sight of the contents he shews the utmost emotion)* Amazement! do I dream! can it be? who wrote this letter?

Sir Clement. Oh! speak out Monsieur, we are all friends.

Chignon.

Chignon. De true Madamoiſelle Alton to whom you charge me to give your letter—ſhe open it—ſhe turn pale—den red—den confuſe—den kiſſe your name—den write, and bid me fly.

Lord Gayville. Confuſion, on confuſion, what does all this mean? explain.

Clifford. You muſt pardon me, I am diſconcerted—confounded—thunder-ſtruck——This letter is indeed of a different nature, from that I expected—I am more intereſted in Miſs Alton's fate, than your Lordſhip—my perplexity is not to be endur'd; friend, come with me inſtantly. [*Exeunt Clifford and Chignon.*

Lord Gayville. Myſtery, and torture! what am I to collect from this? *He* intereſted in the fate of Miſs Alton? he her former acquaintance?

Sir Clement. Why not—and her dupe alſo?

Enter Servant.

Servant. Is Mr. Clifford gone, Sir?

Lord Gayville. (*impatiently*) Who want's him?

Servant. A chairman with a letter, he will not deliver to a ſervant

Sir Clement. Call the fellow in. [*Exit Servant.*] Who knows but he may help us in our difficulties.

Chairman brought in with a letter in his hand.

Lord Gayville. (*ſtill impatiently*) Whom did you bring that letter from?

Chairman. Pleaſe your honor, I don't know; paſſing through the ſquare, a ſaſh flew up, and down came this letter and half a crown upon my head. It could not have fallen better, there's not a fellow in town more expert than I am at private buſineſs—So I reſolved to deliver it ſafely—Is your honor's name Clifford?

Lord Gayville. No indeed, friend, I am not ſo happy a man.

Sir Clement. (*aſide.*) That letter muſt not be loſt though. Here, my friend—I'll take charge of your letter. (*takes the letter.*) Something for your pains.

Chairman. God bleſs your honor, and if you want to ſend an anſwer, my number is forty-ſeven in Bond-ſtreet—your honor, I am known by the name of ſecret Tom.

Lord Gayville. What is the uſe of this deceit? Strong as my ſuſpicion is, a ſeal muſt be ſacred.

Sir Clement. Our circumſtances make an exception to your rule: when there is treaſon in the ſtate, wax gives way.

way (*takes the letter, opens and reads it.*) Faith this is beyond my expectation—tho' the mystery is unfathomable, the aptness of it to my purpose is admirable—Gayville—I wish you joy.

Lord Gayville. Of what?

Sir Clement. Of conviction! if this is not plain! only hear (*reads*) "since my confused lines of a few minutes past, my perplexities redouble upon my spirits——I am in momentary apprehension of further insult from the Alscrip family; I am still more anxious to avoid Lord Gayville" (*pauses and looks at Lord Gayville:*) "do not suspect my sincerity—I have not a thought of him that ought to disturb you."—Here she is Gayville, look at her through the true medium of mutual affection—"I have not a thought of him that ought to disturb you—Fly to me, secure me, my dearest Henry"

Lord Gayville. Dearest Henry!

Sir Clement, (*reads on*) "Dearest Henry—In this call, the danger of your Harriet unites with the impatience of her affection."

Lord Gayville. Hell, and fury! this must be some trick, some forgery (*snatches the letter.*) No by all that's perfidious it is that exquisite hand that baffles imitation.

Sir Clement. All, regular, strict, undeviating modern morals—common property is the first principle of friendship; your horse, your house, your purse, your mistress—nay, your wife would be a better example still of the doctrine of this generous age. Bless fortune, Gayville that has brought the fidelity of your friend and your girl to the test at the same time.

Lord Gayville. Sir, I am not in humour for any spleen but my own. What can this mean? it must have been a secret attachment for years—but then the avowal of a correspondence and the confusion at receiving it—his coldness in traducing her; the passionate interest he express'd in her fate; the conviction of his second letter—It is all delirium. I'll search the matter to the bottom, tho' I go to Clifford's heart for it. (*Exit in great anger.*)

Sir Clement. I'll after the precious fellow too—He is a rogue above my hopes, and the intricacy of his snares excite my curiosity. [*Exit.*

SCENE

SCENE III. *Lady Emily's Apartment.*

Lady Emily discover'd reading.

It will not do. My eyes may run over a thousand subjects, but my thoughts center in one. Ah! that sigh! from the fair follower this morning——I have found it echo in my own heart ever since.

Enter Servant.

Servant. Madam, Mr. Blandish.

Lady Emily. Pooh! did you say I was at home?

Servant. Your Ladyship gave no orders to the contrary.

Lady Emily. Shew him in. [*Exit Servant.*] I must take up my air of levity again——It is the only humour for a fellow who I sometimes allow to entertain me, but who never can get my esteem. I have more calls upon my affectation this unlucky day, than my real disposition would execute in a long life.

Enter Blandish.

Lady Emily. Blandish, I am horridly peevish; have you any thing diverting in news or flattery?

Blandish. In the latter, Madam, nothing. My admiration has all the dullness of truth: but shew me what you think a flaw, and I'll try without flattery to convince you it is a beauty.

Lady Emily. Tolerably express'd——but the idea of a faultless woman is false in point of encomium, she wou'd be respectable, awful, and unattracting. Odd as it may seem, a woman, to charm, requires a little dash of harmless imperfection. I know I've a thousand amiable faults that I wou'd not part with for the world. So try again: Something more new and refined.

Blandish. Examine my heart Lady Emily, and you will find both: The novelty of disinterested passion, and refinement acquired by the study of you.

Lady Emily. Rather better: but *that* does not please me much; the less, perhaps, as it is rather out of your way, and more in that of my friend your sister, who, I observe, always puts a compliment in full view——Your's generally come more forcibly, by affording us the pleasure of finding them out——It is the excellency of a brilliant to play in the dark.

Blandish. Allow yourself to be the brilliant and attend to another allusion. With trembling ambition, I confess, that not content with admiring the jewel, I would wear it.

Lady

Lady Emily. Wear it.

Blandiſh. As an appendage to my heart—Conſcious of it's value, proud of it's diſplay, and devoted to it's preſervation.

Lady Emily. Riddles, Mr. Blandiſh—but ſo let them remain—I aſſure you this hour is very inauſpicious for explanation.

Blandiſh. I fear ſo. For in an hour, when Clifford proves treacherous, who can eſcape ſuſpicion.

Lady Emily. Clifford? for what purpoſe is he introduced in this converſation?

Blandiſh. You aſk'd me for intelligence, the leaſt is, that Clifford has been detected in a clandeſtine intercourſe with the object of Lord Gayville's ſecret paſſion; that he has betray'd the confidence of his friend and patron, and actually carried her off. *(aſide.)* Which Gayville knows by this time with all its aggravations, or Prompt has not been as active as he us'd to be.

Lady Emily. *(with emotion.)* Blandiſh, this is a poor project. Clifford treacherous to his friend! You might as ſoon make me believe Gayville diſpaſſionate, my uncle charitable, or you ingenuous.

Blandiſh. His conduct does not reſt upon opinion, but proof; and when you know it you muſt think of him with averſion.

Lady Emily. Muſt I? Then don't let me hear a word more—I have averſions enough already—*(peeviſhly.)*

Blandiſh. It is impoſſible you can apply that word to one whoſe only offence is to adore you. *(kiſſes her hand.)*

Enter Clifford.

Clifford. *(aſide ſurprized.)* Blandiſh ſo favour'd?

Lady Emily. *(aſide.)* Perverſe accident: what miſtakes now will he make!

Blandiſh. *(aſide.)* The enemy has ſurprized me—but the only remedy in ſuch emergencies, is to ſhew a good countenance.

Clifford. I fear I have been guilty of an unpardonable intruſion.

Blandiſh. Mr. Clifford never can intrude, but though you had not come ſo apropos yourſelf—Lady Emily will bear teſtimony, I have not ſpared my pains to remove any prejudices ſhe might have entertained.

Lady Emily. Had you not better repeat in your own words, Mr. Blandiſh, all the obligiag things you have ſaid of this Gentleman.

Clifford.

Clifford. It is not neceſſary, Madam—If without robbing you of moments that I perceive are precious—

Lady Emily. Sir!

Clifford. I might obtain a ſhort audience, (*bowing to Blandiſh.*)

Blandiſh. (*aſide.*) He's deviliſh impudent—but he cannot ſoon get over facts, and I'll take care the conference ſhall not be long. (*To Lady Emily*)—Lady Emily; hear Mr. Clifford, and judge if I have miſrepreſented him—(*to Clifford.*) When you want a friend you know where to find him. [*Exit.*

Lady Emily. This is an interview, Mr. Clifford, that I deſire not to be underſtood to have authoriſed. It is not to *me*, you are accountable for your actions—I have no perſonal intereſt in them.

Clifford. I know it too well.

Lady Emily. (*peeviſhly.*) Do not run away with the notion neither, that I am therefore intereſted in any *other* perſon's—You have among you, vex'd and diſconcerted me, but there is not a grain of partiality in all my embarraſſment—If you have any eyes you may ſee there is not.

Clifford. Happy Blandiſh, your triumph is evident.

Lady Emily. Blandiſh, the odious creature—he is my abhorrence——You are hardly worſe yourſelf in my bad opinion, tho' you have done ſo much more to deſerve it.

Clifford. How cruel are the circumſtances that compel me to leave you under theſe impreſſions—nay more—at ſuch a time to urge a requeſt, that during your moſt favourable thoughts of me wou'd have appear'd ſtrange if not preſumptuous. This is the key of my apartment. It contains a ſecret that the exigency of the hour oblig'd me, againſt inclination or propriety, to lodge there. Should Sir Clement return before me, I implore you to prevent his diſcovery, and give to what you find within your confidence and protection. Lord Gayville—but I ſhall go too far—the moſt anxious event of my life preſſes on me. I conjure you to comply, by all the compaſſion and tenderneſs nature has treaſured in your heart—not for me—but for occaſions worthy their diſplay. (*gives the key, which ſhe receives with ſome reluctance,*) *and Exit.*

Lady Emily. Heigho!—It's well, he's gone without inſiſting on my anſwer. I was in a ſad flutter of indeciſion. What myſterious means he takes to engage me in a confidence which I could not directly accept!——I am to

find a letter, I suppose—the story of his heart—his screen and defence—My brother's name, also—to furnish me with a new interest in the secret, and one I might swear —One may dislike this art, but must be sensible of his delicacy.——Ah, when those two qualities unite in a man, I am afraid he is an over-match for the wisest of us —Hark!—sure that is the sound of my Uncle's coach—— *(looks out at the window.)* 'Tis he—and now for the secret——Curiosity!——Curiosity! innate irresistible principle in womankind, be my excuse, before I dare question my mind upon other motives. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *Another apartment.*

Enter Lady Emily.

Oh! lud, I could hardly tremble more at opening this man's apartment, were there a possibility of finding him within side. How do people find courage to do a wrong thing, when an innocent discovery cannot be prosecuted without such timidity.

[*Approaches the door timidly and unlocks it.*

Enter Miss Alton.

Lady Emily. Amazement. Miss Alton! what brought you here?

Miss Alton. Madam, I was brought here for an hour's concealment; who I really am, I wou'd not, if possible to avoid it, divulge in this house. When you saw me last, you honour'd me with a favourable opinion——My story not explained at full, might subject me to doubts, that would shake your candour. The circumstances in which I am involved, are strange, and have succeeded with the rapidity and confusion of a dream——Suffer me to recover for a moment my disorder'd spirits, and I *will* satisfy you farther.

Lady Emily. What shall I do?—She is pale and ready to faint—I cannot let her be exposed in such a situation—Retire—You may rely upon me for present security——You know best your pretensions to my future opinion—— *(hearing Sir Clement)* begone, or you are discover'd—— *(shuts her in and locks Clifford's door.)*

Enter Sir Clement.

Sir Clement. Oh! the triumph of honour! Oh! the sincerity of friendship, how my opinions are ratified—— how my system is proved.

Lady Emily. Oh, spirits, spirits, forsake me not—oh! for a moment's dissimulation!

Sir

Sir Clement. There are some now who wou'd feed misanthrophy and misanthropy with such events; to me they give delight as convictions and warnings to mankind.

Lady Emily. Of how superior a quality, my good Uncle, must be the benevolence you possess! It rises with the progress of mischief; and is gratified (upon principles of general good) by finding confidence abused, and esteem misplaced. Am I not right in attributing your joy at present to that sort of refinement?

Sir Clement. Hah! and to what sensations, my good niece, shall be attributed the present state of your spirits? To the disgust you took to Clifford almost at first sight? It will not be with indifference, but pleasure, you will hear of his turning out the veriest rascal, the most complete impostor, the most abandon'd—but hold! hold—I must not wrong him by superlatives——he is match'd too.

Lady Emily. Really! I congratulate you upon such a check of charity.

Sir Clement. And I wish you joy, my pretty pert one, upon the credit your sex has acquir'd, in producing this other Chef-d'ouvre—Such a composition of the highest vices and the lowest——

Lady Emily. I know it will be in vain to oppose the pleasure you take in colouring, by my want of taste to enjoy it; but you may spare your preparatory shading, and come to the point with which I am not acquainted.

Sir Clement. And pray my *incurious* niece, with what points *are* you acquainted?

Lady Emily. That, before Mr Clifford went abroad, it is suspected his passions betray'd him into a fault that must be shocking to your morality, and that I'm sure it is not my intention to justify. He ought to have resisted. It's a shame we have not more examples of young men correcting the frailties of womankind—I dare say he neglected a fair opportunity of becoming a prodigy.

Sir Clement. I protest you have a pretty way of dressing up an apology for the venial faults of youth—and it comes with a peculiar grace from a delicate lady of twenty.

Lady Emily. Come, Sir; no more of your sarcasms. I can treat wrong actions with levity, and yet consider them with detestation. Prudes and pretenders condemn with austerity. To the collection of suspicions you are master of, let me add one—In a young lady of the delicacy—and age you have described, always suspect the virtue that does not wear a smile.

Sir

Sir Clement. And the ſincerity that wears one awkwardly—If you wou'd know the hiſtory of Clifford, aſk but your brother; if of the precious adventurer he has carried off, enquire of Miſs Alſcrip—We ſhall come up with her yet—woe be to any one who harbours her.

Enter Prompt haſtily.

Prompt. Joy to your honour, I ſee you have caught her.

Sir Clement. Her! who?

Prompt. *(Lady Emily turning.)* I aſk your ladyſhip's pardon—Having only the glimpſe of a petticoat, and knowing the object of my chaſe was in this houſe, I confeſs I miſtook you.

Sir Clement. In this houſe?

Prompt. As ſure as we are—She came in through the garden, under Mr. Clifford's arm—up the other ſtairs, I ſuppoſe—If my lady had been hereabouts—ſhe muſt have ſeen her.

Lady Emily (in confuſion.) Yes, but unluckily, I was quite out of the way.

Sir Clement. Such audacioufneſs paſſes credibility—— Emily what do you think of him?

Lady Emily. That he is a monſter *(aſide.)* How my dilemmas multiply?

Sir Clement. What, to my houſe! to his apartment here! I wonder he did not aſk for protection in your's—What ſhould you have ſaid?

Lady Emily. I don't know; but, had I been ſo impoſed upon as to receive her, I ſhould ſcorn to betray even the criminal I had engaged to protect.

Sir Clement (*tries at the door, finds it lock'd.*) Emily, my dear, do ring the bell to know if the houſe-keeper has a ſecond key to this lock.

Lady Emily. What ſhall I do?

Prompt. She is certainly there, Sir, and cannot eſcape. Where can ſhe better remain, till you can aſſemble all parties, confront them face to face, and bring every thing that has paſs'd to a full explanation?

Sir Clement. With all my heart; ſend and collect every body concerned as faſt as poſſible——How I long for ſo complicated an exhibition of the purity of the human heart—Come with me, Emily, and help to digeſt my plan—Friends and lovers, what a ſcene ſhall we ſhew you. [*Takes Lady Emily under the arm*] [*Exeunt.*

End of the Fourth Act.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter Clifford and Mr. Rightly.

Clifford.

YOUR knowledge in the profeſſion, Mr. Rightly, is as queſtionleſs as your integrity; but there is ſomething ſo ſurprizing in the diſcovery of the Charlton eſtate.

Rightly. It is ſo ſtrange, that I will not pronounce a poſitive opinion, till I have read again the collateral papers, and conſider'd fully the deſcents in your family. Your grandfather, I think, was deceived in ſuppoſing he had a right to ſell that part of the Charlton eſtate, which Alſcrip propoſes for his daughter's portion. The ſtrength of this old ſettlement muſt have eſcaped my brother lawyer, or he was mad when he put it into my hands.

Clifford. If you knew too, how the value of the acquiſition is enhanced, by the opportune moment in which it preſents itſelf——I am in too much emotion to thank you as I ought.

Rightly. Sir, I want neither compliment, nor acknowledgement, for revealing what I ſhould be a party to diſhoneſtly to conceal—but that duty done, wou'd it be an abuſe of benevolence, unworthy as ſome of the parties may be, to preſerve the peace of all concerned.

Clifford. In what manner?

Rightly. Sir Clement Flint will renounce the Alſcrip alliance, at the firſt appearance of this defalcation, and if I am well informed, Lord Gayville will not lament the loſs of his intended bride. The young lady is therefore free and ſtill poſſeſſed of a great inheritance.

Clifford. I do not yet perceive what you aim at.

Rightly. She has the faults that wealth and a falſe education create, but they are not incurable. Marry her yourſelf. By ſinking the claim in the union with his family; you command the father's approbation; and the daughter muſt be of a ſtrange mould indeed, if the ſame obligation does not become a corrective of her pride, and an excitement to her gratitude. *(ſmiling)* I give ſome token of my friendſhip, when, as a lawyer, I propoſe you a wife inſtead of a ſuit in chancery.

Clifford.

Clifford. I feel all the kindness of your suggestion; but if my claim is precarious, it is as repugnant to my delicacy as to my inclination, to realize it upon such terms; if it is substantial, I have such a disposition to make—you have a right to all my thoughts; but I have an appointment to obey, that admits no time for explanation; favor me for a moment with your pencil. (*Rightly takes out a pencil and pocket-book.*) And a blank page in that memorandum book. [*Clifford writes.*

Rightly. My life on't, his head is turn'd upon some gill not worth a shilling——There is an amiable defect, but a very observable one in the nature of some men. A good head and heart operate as effectually as vice or folly could do to make them improvident.

Clifford. Mr. Rightly, I confide to your hands a most secret relative to the Charlton estate; do not read it till you return home. (*gives the book, rises and goes.*) There, Gayville, is one reply to your challenge——and now for another.

Rightly. One moment, Sir—I engage for no secrecy that my own judgment shall not warrant.

Clifford. And the benevolence of your heart approves—Those are my conditions.——

[*Exeunt on opposite sides.*

SCENE II. *Hyde-Park.*

Enter Lord Gayville impatiently, looking at his watch.

Not here! I am sure I marked the hour as well as the place precisely in my note. [*walks about.*] Had I been told three days ago, that I should have been the appellant in a premeditated duel, I should have thought it an insult upon my principles—That Clifford should be the cause of my transgressing the legal and sacred duties, we have ever both maintained—oh! it would have seemed a visionary impossibility.—But he comes, to cut reflection short——

Enter Clifford.

Lord Gayville. I waited for you, Sir.

[*Bows in silence.*

Clifford.

Lord Gayville. That ceremonial would grace an encounter of punctilio, but applies ill to the terms upon which I have called you here.

Clifford. What terms are those, my Lord?

Lord Gayville. Vengeance! Ample, final vengeance! Draw, Sir.

Clifford.

Clifford. No, my Lord, my sword is reserved for more becoming purposes: It is not the instrument of passion; and has yet been untried in a dispute with my friend.

Lord Gayville. But why is it not ready for a different trial, the vindication of perfidy, the blackest species of perfidy, that ever the malignant enemy of mankind infused into the human breast—perfidy to the friend who loved and trusted you, and in the nearest interests of his heart.

Clifford. Take care, my Lord; should my blood boil like your's, and it is riding high, you know not the punishment that awaits you. Insane temerity, your gross provocation and thirst of blood make temperance appear disgrace—I am tempted to take a revenge——

Lord Gayville. [*Draws.*] The means are ready. Come, Sir, you are to give an example of qualities generally held incompatible—bravery and dishonour.

Clifford. Another such word, and by Heaven!—How have I deserved this opinion?

Lord Gayville. Ask your conscience—Under the mask of friendship you have held a secret intercourse with the woman I adore; you have supplanted me in her affections, you have robb'd me of the very charm of my life—can you deny it?

Clifford. I avow it all.

Lord Gayville. Unparalleled insolence of guilt.

Clifford. Are you sure there is nothing within the scope of possibility, that wou'd excuse or atone—

Lord Gayville. Death—Death only—no abject submission—no compromise for infamy—chuse instantly—and save yourself from the only stretch of baseness left—the invention of a falsehood to palliate—

Clifford. (*In the utmost agitation, and drawing his sword,*) Falsehood!—You shall have no other explanation. [*After a struggle within himself, Clifford drops the point and exposes his breast.*]

Lord Gayville. Stand upon your defence, Sir—What do you mean?

Clifford. You said nothing but my life wou'd satisfy you, take it, and remember me.

Lord Gayville. I say so still—but upon an equal pledge—I am no assassin.

Clifford. [*with great caution.*] If to strike at the heart of your friend, more deeply than that your instrument—

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in your hand could do, makes an aſſaſſin, you have been one already.

Lord Gayville. That look, that tone, how like to innocence? Had he not avow'd ſuch abominable practices—

Clifford. I avow them again—I have rival'd you in the love of the woman you adore—her affections are rivetted to me. I have removed her from your ſight; ſecured her from your recovery——

Lord Gayville. Damnation!

Clifford. I have done it to ſave unguarded beauty; to ſave unprotected innocence; to ſave a ſiſter.

Lord Gayville. A ſiſter!

Clifford. [*With exultation.*] Vengeance! Ample, final vengeance! [*a pauſe.*] It is accompliſh'd—over him—and over myſelf—my victory is compleat.

Lord Gayville. Where ſhall I hide my ſhame!

Clifford. We'll ſhare it, and forget it here. [*Embraces.*

Lord Gayville. Why did you keep the ſecret from me?

Clifford. I knew it not myſelf, till the ſtrange concurrence of circumſtances, to which you were in part witneſs a few hours ſince, brought it to light. I meant to impart to you the diſcovery, when my temper took fire——Let us bury our mutual errors in the thought, that we now for life are friends.

Lord Gayville Brotheris, Clifford—Let us interchange that title and doubly, doubly ratify it. Unite me to your charming ſiſter; accept the hand of lady Emily in return—her heart I have diſcover'd to be yours—We'll leave the world to the ſordid and the taſteleſs; let an Alſcrip, or, a Sir Clement Flint, wander after the fantom of happineſs, we ſhall find her real retreat, and hold her by the bonds ſhe covets, virtue, love and friendſhip.

Clifford Not a word more, my lord; the bars againſt your propoſal are inſuperable.

Lord Gayville. What bars?

Clifford. Honour! propriety—and pride.

Lord Gayville. Pride, Clifford?

Clifford. Yes, my Lord, Harriot Clifford, ſhall not *ſteal* the hand of a prince; nor will *I*—tho' doating on Lady Emily, with a paſſion like your own, bear the idea of a clandeſtine union in a family, to whom I am bound by obligation and truſt. Indeed, my lord, without Sir Clement's conſent, you muſt think no more of my ſiſter.

Lord

Lord Gayville. Stern Stoic, but I *will*, and *not* clandestinely; I'll instantly to Sir Clement.

Clifford. Do not be rash—Fortune or some better agent, is working in wonders—Meet me presently at your Uncle's; in the mean while promise not to stir in this business.

Lord Gayville. What hope from delay?

Clifford. Promise——

Lord Gayville. I am in a state to catch at shadows—I'll try to obey you.

Clifford. Farewell!—— [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Sir Clement's House.*

Enter Miss Alscrip in great spirits, followed by Mrs. Blandish.

Miss Alscrip. I am delighted at this summons from Sir Clement, Blandish; poor *old clear-sight*, I hope he has projected a reconciliation.

Mrs. Blandish. How I rejoice to see those smiles returned to the face that was made for them!

Miss Alscrip. Return'd, Blandish? I desire you will not insinuate it ever was without them—Why sure, you would not have the world imagine the temper of an Heiress of my class, was to be ruffled by the loss of a paltry earl—I have been highly diverted with what has passed from the beginning to the end.

Mrs. Blandish. Well, if good humour can be a fault, sure the excess you carry it to must be the example.

Miss Alscrip. I desire it may be made known in all companies, that I have done nothing but laugh——nay, it is true too.

Mrs. Blandish. My dear creature, of what consequence is the truth, when you are charging me with the execution of your desires.

Miss Alscrip. Could any thing be more diverting than my Lord's intriguing with my *chamber-maid* before marriage, that must be your cue.

Mrs. Blandish. Excellent!

Miss Alscrip. The design was in rule, and founded upon the best precedents—only the time, in the newspaper phrase, was premature, he! he! he!

Mrs. Blandish. He! he! he!

Miss Alscrip. And then the airs of the moppet—Could any thing be more ridiculous?

Mrs. Blandiſh. The rivalſhip you mean—Rival, Miſs Alſcrip—He! he! he! [*Half laugh.*

Miſs Alſcrip. Yes, but when you take this tone in public, laugh a little louder.

Mrs. Blandiſh. Rival, Miſs Alſcrip, ha! ha! ha!

Both. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Blandiſh. (*wiping her eyes as not quite recovered from her laugh.*) For mirth's ſake, what is become of the rival?———Who will you chuſe ſhe ſhall have run away with?

Miſs Alſcrip. Leave it in doubts as it is; fixing circumſtances confines the curioſity to one ſtory which may be diſproved; uncertainty leaves it open to an hundred, and makes them all probable. But I hear ſome of the company upon the ſtairs: Now, Blandiſh—You ſhall be witneſs to the temper and dignity, with which a woman of my conſequence can diſcard a quality courtſhip that offends her—Having ſufficiently mortified the Uncle and Nephew, with a triumphant raillery all my own, I ſhall requeſt Lady Emily to ſet the Paphian mimp upon the family diſappointment, and leave them together to the exerciſe of the patience that uſually attends the loſs of a hundred thouſand pounds.

Mrs. Blandiſh. Sweet temper'd ſoul!

Enter Sir Clement Flint.

Sir Clement. Miſs Alſcrip, your———

[*As he's beginning to ſay your humble ſervant.*

Enter Blandiſh out of breath.

Blandiſh. The duel's over, and the combatants in whole ſkins—Never ran ſo faſt ſince I was born———

Sir Clement.—To be too late by ſome minutes in your intelligence. I know you feel the diſappointment from the ſincere affection you bear all parties.

Miſs Alſcrip. Duel!—Pray let us hear the particulars—As there is no miſchief I ſhall not faint. [*Ironically.*

Sir Clement. I gueſs it has been of the common place kind.——Hats over the brows—glum ſilence—thruſt—parry—and ripoſte—Explain, and ſhake hands: Your man of honour never ſets his friend right, till he has exchang'd a ſhot—or a thruſt: Oh, a little eſſence of ſteel or gunpowder, is a morning whet to the temper: It carries off all qualms, and leaves the digeſtion free for any thing that is preſented to it.

Miſs

Miſs Alſcrip. Dear, how fortunate! Conſidering the pills ſome folks have to ſwallow,

Sir Clement. Blandiſh, ſee if the door of Clifford's room is yet unlocked, there is a perſon within you little expect to find, and that it may be proper for this lady, and me to interrogate together.——I don't know what to call her ——Inexplicability in petticoats. *(The door opens) and Enter Lady Emily.*

Blandiſh. Lady Emily!

Sir Clement. Inexplicable, with a vengeance.

Miſs Alſcrip. (aſide) Lady Emily, ſhut up in Clifford's apartment! Beyond my expectation, indeed. *[With a malicious air.*

[Lady Emily ſeems pleaſed.]

Sir Clement. (drily) Lady Emily, I know you were always cautious whom you viſited, and never gave a better proof of your diſcernment.

Lady Emily. Never——oh my poor dear uncle you little think what is going to befal you.

Sir Clement. Not a diſappointment in love, I hope.

Lady Emily. No, but in ſomething much nearer your heart——your ſyſtem is threaten'd with a blow, that I think, and from my ſoul I hope, it never will recover: would you gueſs that the ſagacious obſervations of your whole life are upon the point of being confounded by the production———

Sir Clement. Of what?

Lady Emily. A woman of ingenuous diſcretion, and a man of unaffected integrity.

Sir Clement. Hah!

Mrs. Blandiſh. What can ſhe mean?

Miſs Alſcrip. Nothing good——ſhe looks ſo pleaſant.

Lady Emily. Come forth, my injur'd friend. Our perſonal acquaintance has been ſhort, but our hearts were intimate from the firſt ſight. *(preſenting her)* Your priſoner, Sir, is Miſs Harriet Clifford.

Sir Clement. Clifford's ſiſter!

Miſs Alſcrip. What, the run-away Alton, turned into a ſprig of quality.

Lady Emily. (diſdainfully to Miſs Alſcrip.) The humble dependant of Alſcrip's houſe——the wanton——the paragon of fraud——the only female that can equal Clifford *(tauntingly to Sir Clement.)* She is indeed! *(with emphaſis and affection.)*

Blandiſh. (*aſide*) Oh, rot the ſource of the family fondneſs——I ſee I have no card left in my favour——but the Heireſs. (*Goes to her and pays court.*) (*During this converſation, aſide, Lady Emily ſeems encouraging Miſs Clifford—Sir Clement muſing, and by turns examining her.*)

Sir Clement. (*to himſelf*) "Ingenuous diſcretion!"

(*Enter Clifford (and runs to his ſiſter.*)

Clifford. My deareſt Harriet! the joy I purpoſed in preſenting you here, is anticipated; but, my blameleſs fugitive! relate the tale of your diſtreſſes, and my pride in you will not be a wonder.

Miſs Clifford. They have been ſhort——and are overpaid by your indulgence. Inſulted by the family I liv'd with; made more wretched by a deteſted purſuit which my uncle's violence enforc'd, and confident of your being returned, I fled to London for an aſylum.

Sir Clement. Which has been admirably choſen in my houſe.

Clifford. Sir, I really think ſo. Lady Emily's generoſity, your juſtice, and my ſiſter's honour make it ſacred. (*While Clifford is ſpeaking*)

Enter Lord Gayville. (*ſtarts at ſeeing Miſs Clifford.*)

Sir Clement. (*perceiving Lord Gayville*) And peculiarly ſecure againſt the viſits of *this diſtreſſed* purſuer.

Lord Gayville. (*with rapture*) Her perſecutor and her convert. Her virtues which no humility could conceal, and every trial made more reſplendant, diſcover'd, diſgraced, and reclaimed a libertine.

Miſs. Clifford. How am I diſtreſs'd——what ought I to anſwer?

Lord Gayville. Impreſſed ſentiment upon deſire, gave honour to paſſion, and drew from my ſoul a vow, which heaven chaſtiſe me when I violate, to obtain her by a legal, ſacred claim, or renounce fortune, family and friends, and become a ſelf devoted outcaſt of the world.

Miſs Clifford. Oh! brother, interpoſe.

Sir Clement. My Lord, your fortune, family, and friends are much oblig'd to you. Your part is perfect—Mr. Clifford you are call'd upon. Miſs, in ſtrict propriety, throws the buſineſs upon her relations—Come finiſh the comedy; join one of her hands to the gallant's, while, with the other, ſhe covers her bluſhes—and he in rapture delivers the moral. All for Love, or, the World well Loſt. (*Miſs Clifford ſtill appears agitated.*)

Clifford.

Clifford. Be patient, my Harriet, this is the ſchool for prejudice, and the leſſon of its ſhame is near.

Miſs Alſcrip. I vow theſe ſingular circumſtances give me quite a confuſion of pleaſure. The aſtoniſhing good fortune of my late Protegee in finding ſo impaſſion'd a friendſhip in her brother's bed-chamber; the captivating eloquence of Lord Gayville in winding up an eclairciſſement which I admire—not for the firſt time—to day—and the ſuperlative joy, Sir Clement muſt feel at an union, founded upon the purity of the paſſions, are ſubjects of ſuch different congratulation, that I hardly know where to begin.

Lady Emily. (aſide.) Charming!—her inſolence will juſtify what ſo ſeldom occurs to one——a ſevere retort without a poſſible ſenſe of compunction.

Miſs Alſcrip. But in point of fortune——don't imagine, Sir Clement, I would inſinuate that the lady is deſtitute—oh Lord, far from it. Her muſical talents are a portion ——I can't ſay I have yet ſeen a counteſs open a concert for her own benefit; but there can be no reaſon why a woman of the firſt quality ſhould not be directreſs of the Opera——Indeed, after all that has happen'd, it is the beſt chance I ſee for a good adminiſtration there.

Alſcrip and Rightly [without.]

Alſcrip. Why ſtop a moment——Mr. Rightly; 'Death after chaſing you all over the town, don't be ſo impatient the inſtant I overtake you.

Sir Clement. What have we here—the lawyers in diſpute?

Alſcrip. (*entering.*) You have not heard my laſt word yet.

Rightly. (entering.) You have heard mine, Sir.

Alſcrip. (*whiſpering.*) I'll make the five thouſand I offer'd, ten.

Rightly. Millions would not bribe me—[*coming forward*] When I detect wrong, and vindicate the ſufferer, I feel the ſpirit of the Law of England, and the pride of a practitioner.

Alſcrip. Lucifer confound ſuch practices. *(In this part of the ſcene, Sir Clement, Lord Gayville, Lady Emily, Clifford, and Miſs Clifford, form one groupe.)*

(Rightly opens a deed, and points out a part of it to Sir Clement.)

(Mr. and Miſs Alſcrip carry on the following ſpeeches on the ſide at which Alſcrip has enter'd. And Mr. and Mrs. Blandiſh are farther back obſerving.)

Alscrip. That curſed! curſed flaw!———

Miſs Alscrip. Flaw! who has dared to talk of one? not in my reputation, Sir?

Alscrip. No, but in my eſtate, which is a damn'd deal worſe.

Miſs Alscrip. How! what!—when!—where——This eſtate that was to be ſettled upon me?

Alscrip. Yes, but that *ſir* turn'd topſy turvey ——when *ſhe* broke into *my* room this morning, and the devil followed to fly away with all my faculties at once——I am ruin'd——Let us ſee what you will ſettle upon your poor father.

Miſs Alscrip. I ſettle upon you?

Mrs. Blandiſh. This is an embarraſſing accident.

Miſs Alscrip. Yes, and a pretty help you are, with a drop chin like a frontiſpiece to the lamentations.

Rightly (coming forward with Sir Clement.) I ſtated this with ſome doubt this morning, but now my credit as a lawyer upon the iſſue.—The Heireſs falls ſhort of the terms in your treaty by two thouſand pounds a year——which this deed, lately and providentially diſcover'd, entails upon the heirs of Sir William Charlton, and conſequently, in right of his mother, upon this gentleman!

Lady Emily. How!

Lord Cayville. Happy diſappointment.

Sir Clement (aſide.) Two thouſand a year to Clifford! It's a pity for the parade of diſintereſtedneſs, that he open'd his deſigns upon Emily, before he knew his pretenſions.

Lady Emily (aſide.) Now, if there were twenty ceilings, and as many floors, could not I find a ſpot to ſettle my ſilly looks upon.

(Sir Clement obſerves her with his uſual ſlyneſs.)

(Then turning towards Alscrip) Pains a' ſalle upon me? I ſhould have thought the attempt beyond the collective aſſurance of weſtminſter-hall—until he takes the loſs as much to heart as if he bought the eſtate with his own money.

Alscrip (with heſitation.) Sir Clement—what think you—of an amicable adjuſtment of all theſe buſineſſes?

Sir Clement (ironically.) Nothing can be more reaſonable. The value of Miſs Alscrip's amicable diſpoſition, placed againſt the abatement of her fortune, is a matter of the moſt eaſy computation; and to decide the portion, Mr. Clifford ought to relinquiſh of his acquiſition—Lady Emily——will you be a referée?

Lady

Lady Emily. (*aside.*) Yes; the Lynx has me—I thought I should not escape—(*to him.*) No, sir; my poor abilities only extend to an amicable endeavour here. (*to Miss Alscrip.*) And really, Miss Alscrip, I see no reason for your being dispirited, there may be many ready made titles at market, within the reach of your purse. Or, why should not a woman of your consequence originate her own figure, dear? there's an old admirer of mine——He wou'd make a very pretty lord—and indeed, wou'd contribute something on his own part to ease the purchase—The Blandish family is well with all administrations, and a new coronet is always as big again as an old one. I don't see how you cou'd lay out part of your independency to more advantage.

Blandish. (*aside.*) Yes, but since flaws are in fashion, I shall look a little into things before I agree to the bargain.

Lady Emily. And if you replace this part of your family, (*pointing to Miss Clifford*) by making an humble companion of your old gentleman, I protest, I do not see any great alteration in your affairs.

Miss Alscrip. (*aside.*) I'll die before I'll discover my vexation—and yet, (*half crying*) no title—no place.

Lady Emily. Depend upon it, Miss Alscrip, your place will be found exactly where it ought to be. The public eye in this country is never long deceiv'd——Believe me—and cherish obscurity—Title may bring forward merits, but it also places our defects in horrid relief.

Miss Clifford. You seem to expect something from me, Miss Alscrip—Be in no pain for any thing that has pass'd between us—My pity has entirely overpower'd my resentment.

Alscrip. Molly, the sooner we get out of court the better—we have damnably the worst of the cause, so come along Molly (*taking her under the arm*)—and farewel to Berkeley-square. Whoever wants Alscrip's house, will find it in the neighbourhood of Furnival's-Inn, with the noble title of Scriviner, in capitals—Blank bonds at the windows, and a brass knocker at the door (*pulling her.*) come along Molly.

Miss Alscrip. (*half crying*) (*aside*) Oh! the barbarous metamorphosis—but his *flusterum* for a week, will serve my temper, as a regimen. I will then take the management of my affairs into my own hands, and break from my cloud anew: and you shall find (*to the company*) there

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are thoſe without a coronet, that can be as ſaucy, and as loud, and ſtop the way in all public places as well as the beſt of you. (*Lady Emily laughs*) Yes, Madam, and without borrowing your Ladyſhip's airs.

Alſcrip. (*pulling her.*) Come along, Molly.

Miſs Alſcrip. Oh you have been a jewel of a father. (*The company laugh.*)

[*Exit Mr. and Miſs Alſcrip.*

(*Mr. and Mrs. Blandiſh ſtay behind.*)

Blandiſh. (*aſide*) What a curſed turn things have taken! My ſchemes evaporate like inflammable air, and down drops poor adventurer.

Lady Emily. Mrs. Blandiſh, ſure you do not leave your friend, Miſs Alſcrip, in diſtreſs?

Mrs. Blandiſh. We'll not diſturb the aſhes of the dead—my ſweet lady Emily.—

Blandiſh. None of your flouriſhes, my dear ſiſter—they already think you a walking dedication—When we can't eſcape a ſituation, the only way is to brave it—So let them tell us we are ſycophants—be it ſo—then we are the beſt friends ſociety has. Flattery is the diet of good humour, and not one of you can live without it, and when you quarrel with the family of Blandiſh, you leave reſin'd cookery to be fed upon ſcraps, by a poor couſin, or a led captain———(*taking his ſiſter under his arm.*)

Mrs. Blandiſh. (*as ſhe goes off*) Oh the two charming pair. [*Exit with Blandiſh.*

Lord Gayville. Precious groupe, fare ye well (*to Sir Clement.*) And now, Sir, whatever may be your determinations towards me—here are pretenſions you may patronize without breach of diſcretion. The eſtate which devolves to my friend———

Rightly. To prevent errors, is not his to beſtow.

Sir Clement. What now—more flaws?

Rightly. The eſtate was his beyond the reach of controverſy: but before he was truly ſure of it, on his way to Hyde-Park did this ſpendthriſt, by a ſtroke of his pen, diveſt himſelf of every ſhilling—Here is the covenant by which he binds himſelf to execute proper conveyances as ſoon as the neceſſary forms can be gone through.

Lord Gayville. And in favour of whom is this deſperate act?

Rightly. Of a moſt dangerous ſeducer—a little mercenary, that when ſhe gets hold of the heart, does not leave an atom of it our own.

All.

All. How!

Rightly. (*with feeling.*) And there she stands; (*pointing to Miss Clifford.*) with a look and emotion that would condemn her before any court in the universe.

Lady Emily. Glorious—matchless Clifford!

Miss Clifford. Brother, this must not be.

Clifford. Your pardon, my dear Harriet, it is done. Sir Clement, my sister's fortune is still far short of what you expected with Miss Alscrip; for that deficiency, I have only to offer the virtues, Lord Gayville has proved, and the affection she found it easier to control than to conceal. If you will receive her, thus circumstanced, into your family, mine has been an acquisition indeed.

Lady Emily. (*coming up to Sir Clement.*) Now, Sir, where's suspicion! Where is now the ruling principle that governs mankind! Thro' what perspective, by what trial, will you find self-interest here? What, not one pithy word to mock my credulity!——Alas! poor Yorick—quite chop-fallen.—Forgive me, Sir, I own I am agitated to extravagance——You thought me disconcerted at the first discovery; I am delighted at the last, there's a problem in my disposition worthy your solving.

Sir Clement. [*Who has been profoundly thoughtful*] Mr. Rightly, favour me with that paper in your hand.

Rightly. Mr. Clifford's engagement, [*Gives the paper, Sir Clement looks it over and tears it.*] What do you mean, Sir?

Sir Clement. To cancel the obligation, and pay the equivalent to Gayville, or if Clifford will have his own way and become a beggar by renewing it, to make an heiress of my own for his reparation—and there *she* stands [*pointing to Lady Emily*] With sensibility and vivacity so uncommonly blended, that they extract benevolence where ever it exists, and create it where it never was before—Your point is carried—You may both fall upon your knees, for the consent of ladies.

Lord Gayville. (*to Miss Clifford*) In this happy moment, let my errors be forgot, and my love alone remember'd.

Miss Clifford. With these sanctions for my avowal—I will not deny that I saw and felt the sincerity of your attachment, from the time I was capable of being restrained by respect.

Clifford. Words are wanting, Lady Emily—

Lady

Lady Emily. I wish they may with all my heart, but it is generally remarked that wanting words, is the beginning of a florid set speech—To be serious, Clifford—We want but little explanation on either side—Sir Clement, will tell you how long we have converſed by our actions. (*Gives her hand*) My dear Uncle, how a ſmile becomes you in its natural meaning.

Sir Clement. If you think me a convert, you are miſtaken. I have ever believed *ſelf* to be the predominant principle of the human mind—My heart at this inſtant confirms the doctrine—There's my problem for yours, my dear Emily, and may all who hear me agree in this ſolution—to reward the deſerving, and make thoſe we love happy, is ſelf-intereſt in the extreme.

FINIS.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Miſs FARREN.

THE Comic Muſe, who here erects her ſhrine,
To *court your* offerings, and *accepts* of mine,
Sends me to ſtate an anxious author's plea,
And wait with humble hope this Court's decree.
By no Prerogative will ſhe decide,
She vows, an Engliſh Jury is her pride.
Then for our Heireſs—forced from finer air,
That lately fann'd her plumes in Berkeley-ſquare;
Will ſhe be *helpleſs* in her new reſort,
And find no friends—about the inns of court?
Sages be candid—tho' you hate a knave,
Sure, for *example*, you'll a Rightly ſave.
Be kind for once ye *clerks*—ye ſportive ſirs
Who haunt our Theatres in boots and ſpurs,
So may you ſafely preſs your nightly hobby,
Run the whole ring—and *end* it in the lobby.
Lovers of *truth*, be kind; and own that *here*
That love is ſtrain'd as far as it will bear.
Poets may write—*Philoſophers* may dream——
But would the world bear truth in the extreme?
What, not one Blandiſh left behind! not one!
Poets are mute, and Painters all undone:
Where are thoſe charms that Nature's term ſurvive,
The maiden bloom that glows at *forty-five?*
Truth takes the pencil—*wrinkles—freckles—ſquint*,
The whole's tranſform'd,—the very devil's in't,
Dimples turn ſcars, the ſmile becomes a ſcowl!
The hair the ivy-buſh, the face the owl.

But ſhall an *author* mock the flatt'rer's power?
Oh might you all be *Blandiſſes* this hour!
Then would the candid jurors of the Pit,
Grant their mild paſſport to the realms of Wit;
Then would I mount the car where oft I ride,
And place the favour'd culprit by my ſide.

To aid our flight—one faſhionable hint——
See my authority—a Morning Print—
"We learn"—obſerve it Ladies—"France's Queen
"Loves, like our own, a heart-directed ſcene;
"And while each thought ſhe weighs, each beauty ſcans
Breaks, in one night's applauſe, a ſcore of fans!".

[*beating her fan againſt her hand.*

Adopt the mode, ye Belles—ſo end my prattle,
And ſhew how you'll outdo a Bourbon Rattle.